

BUILDING RESILIENCE FROM WITHIN: ENHANCING HUMANITARIAN CIVIL- MILITARY COORDINATION IN POST- HAIYAN PHILIPPINES

NTS Report No. 6 | December 2016

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Executive Summary

Super Typhoon Haiyan is the most devastating weather disturbance and the first major mega-disaster that hit the Philippines in recent memory. Its aftermath offers lessons that need to be factored into the country's HADR policies, systems, and capacities if the country is to build resilience to increasingly frequent and extreme weather events like Super Typhoon Haiyan.

This NTS report outlines and examines the changes made to HADR based on lessons from Super Typhoon Haiyan, conducted by major stakeholders such as the national government, Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), non-governmental organisations (NGOs), scientists, and local government units (LGUs). It analyses how these stakeholders transform lessons from Super Typhoon Haiyan into policy responses and reforms to HADR operations, including civil-military coordination. This document is primarily based on fieldwork interviews conducted in Metro Manila in July 2016 with high-ranking officers of the Armed Forces of the Philippines; current and former officials of civilian government agencies included in the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC); humanitarian NGOs; a representative of the academic and scientific community; and a representative from the private sector.

This report is divided into four major parts. **Part 1** introduces the Philippines as a disaster-prone country facing decades-old armed conflicts, and contains relevant studies on HADR and civil-military coordination in the Philippines primarily in the context of security sector reform in the Philippine military. **Part 2** identifies the issues and challenges to HADR and civil-military coordination during Super Typhoon Haiyan. **Part 3** enumerates and examines the major policy and structural reforms to HADR and civil-military coordination based on lessons learned from Super Typhoon Haiyan, including how issues cited in Part 2 were addressed, or reasons why they were not. **Part 4** offers recommendations to complement innovations that have been institutionalised and mentioned in Part 3.

Major findings of this report are the following:

National disaster response plan

The humanitarian challenge during Super Typhoon Haiyan challenged the capacity of local and national officials (primarily due to the absence of a comprehensive disaster response plan) despite the fact that the country has always been hit by natural disasters. One significant reform initiated by the Philippine government after Super Typhoon Haiyan was the National Disaster Response Plan (NDRP). It outlines the processes and mechanisms needed to facilitate a coordinated response by national and/or local level departments/agencies.

Coordination among HADR actors

Despite many disasters that have struck the Philippines in recent decades, Super Typhoon Haiyan highlighted the importance of coordination, buy-in, and participation of all HADR stakeholders in the country.

The NDRP facilitates collaborative networks that are necessary to remove traditional institutional barriers and facilitate the sharing of information among NDRRMC council member-agencies. Learning from the Haiyan experience, operational mechanisms have been introduced or reinvigorated, primarily by the Philippine military, to facilitate coordination. The AFP Multinational Coordinating Centre (MNCC) and the Civil-Military Coordinating Centre (CMCC) were set up to coordinate foreign militaries and international responders when the Philippine government, through the President, calls for international assistance (Reuters, 2013; Dizon, 2013).

Disaster risk reduction and mitigation

One of the major gaps in disaster preparedness for Super Typhoon Haiyan was risk communication. The government was unable to communicate the impact or potential impact of a hazard (e.g., Haiyan's storm surges) in a way that people could have made necessary precautions and taken appropriate action.

One important innovation developed by the Office of Civil Defence (OCD) is the Pre-Disaster Risk Assessment (PDRA) to avoid another Haiyan-like devastation. PDRA is a process to assess a hazard's level of risk given the degree of exposure and vulnerability in a specific area.

Extensive role of the military

One important operational reform of the AFP during the post-Haiyan period is the activation of one battalion each for the Army, Air Force and Navy, fully equipped and dedicated for HADR missions. The military now has three battalions in place for deployment. The AFP also considers itself as the country's most robust first responder that can provide the needed manpower and logistical equipment for HADR operations. More importantly, military units are also deployed all over the country, facilitating the AFP's availability to prepare for and respond to a disaster in any part of the country.

Localisation of HADR

One evident change after Super Typhoon Haiyan is that local governments have become more conscious of achieving "zero-casualty", a symbolic end-goal of the government to minimise disaster-related casualties. However, the results of an audit reveal that disaster risk reduction and mitigation (DRRM) programs remain highly reactive, executed intermittently or only after disasters. As one AFP general noted, local governments seem to have forgotten the lessons from Super Typhoon Haiyan as they are not investing in DRRM.² Meanwhile, even before Super Typhoon Haiyan, several humanitarian NGOs in the Philippines have already been strongly conducting locally-led humanitarian responses. Since the super typhoon, these locally-led responses have been further enhanced by NGOs through strengthening the capacity of local community organisations on disaster risk reduction and preparedness.

² Interview with a high-ranking officer of AFP, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 22 July 2016.

Introduction

The Philippines is geographically located in an area prone to natural disasters. It ranked fourth among countries hit by the most number of disasters in 2015, according to a report by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR). The Philippines is the third most vulnerable country globally in terms of risks from tropical cyclones. Given its location, archipelagic formation in the tropical Pacific, and population distribution, the Philippines is greatly susceptible to the impacts of climate change (Climate Change Commission, 2011). Typhoons or tropical cyclones are constant threats to the country. As a result of its location along the typhoon belt on the North Pacific Basin in the Pacific it experiences an average of 20 to 30 typhoons per year (five to seven of which having great possibility to be destructive). A quarter of these typhoons have wind strength of up to 200 kilometers per hour (Commission on Audit, 2014). Such strong winds from typhoons can destroy infrastructure and generate tsunami-like storm surges that can flatten coastal communities.

The country is located in the Pacific Ring of Fire, along two major tectonic plates of the world – the Eurasian and Pacific Plates and experiences an average of 20 earthquakes per day, or 100 to 200 every year. In the past 400 years, 90 destructive earthquakes have been recorded in the country. There are also 300 volcanoes in the country, 22 of these are active and 36,289 kilometers of the coastline is vulnerable to tsunami (Commission on Audit, 2014). However, multiple hazards are common in the Philippines. Super Typhoon Haiyan, for instance, generated storm surges which devastated coastal towns and cities. From a wider perspective, the Philippines does not only deal with geological or hydro-meteorological hazards; there are also human-induced hazards such as low-intensity armed conflict.

The southern Philippines has a long history of conflict involving the Armed Forces of the Philippines, paramilitary groups, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Forces (BIFF), and the Abu Sayyaf Group. The current government has entered into peace negotiations with the MILF and MNLF to move forward the proposed Bangsamoro Basic Law while intensifying military operations to exterminate the Abu Sayyaf Group. The Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army (CPP-NPA) has been waging the longest-running communist insurgency in the world. Currently, by official estimates, it has 3,000-4,000 armed rebels, mostly located in far-flung, impoverished towns in the Philippines (Romero, 2016). The most recent high-profile formal talks between the new government and the CPP were held in Oslo, Norway in August 2016, which resulted in the declaration of a ceasefire. A peace agreement, however, has yet to be agreed. Meanwhile, President Rodrigo Duterte vowed to end the communist rebellion by means of peace talks by 2022. Conflict-affected communities in the Philippines are mostly vulnerable to natural disasters, complicating the delivery of humanitarian aid to those in need. Internal conflicts pose risks to the safety of humanitarian workers and may render vulnerable communities inaccessible to first responders. Internal conflicts can lead to complex humanitarian emergencies, which are "deep social crises in which large numbers of people die from war, displacement, disease and hunger". These are more often than not man-made, although a natural disaster on conflict-afflicted communities may lead to a complex humanitarian emergency (Klugman, 2016: p.1).

Objectives and Significance of the Study

This report outlines and examines the changes made to HADR based on lessons from Super Typhoon Haiyan by major stakeholders—such as the national government, AFP, NGOs, scientists, the private sector, and local government units. This report analyses how these stakeholders transform lessons from Super Typhoon Haiyan into policy responses and implements reforms to HADR operations, including civil-military coordination. This report is primarily based on fieldwork interviews conducted in July 2016 with the officers of the AFP; current and former officials of HADR-related civilian government agencies belonging to the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC); humanitarian NGOs, a representative of the scientific and academic community, and a representative from the private sector. This document is likewise enriched with earlier findings from comprehensive publications on Super Typhoon Haiyan, as cited in the Review of Related Literature.

This report places special emphasis on civil-military coordination in the conduct of HADR operations in the Philippines. It investigates the ongoing dynamics of civil-military coordination and reforms conducted to enhance coordination among the military, local governments, national government agencies, scientists, the private sector, and NGOs after Super Typhoon Haiyan. It highlights the transformation of the traditional role of the Philippine military in national security as it attempts to provide protection and disaster relief in complex humanitarian emergencies. It likewise examines how the military is reshaping its traditional security role, now being among the leading agencies conducting humanitarian assistance and disaster relief in the Philippines.

This study on civil-military coordination is significant primarily because of the increasing role of the Philippine military in delivering HADR to disaster-prone and conflict-affected communities in the Philippines in recent years. It highlights the importance of civilian control over the military, a democratic principle enshrined in the Philippine Constitution,³ even in times of disasters when civilian officials, especially at the local level, are legally mandated to be the lead actors in disaster preparedness and response. It must be noted that the country has long been embarking on security sector reform aimed at professionalising the military as well as insulating it from partisan politics. The AFP has a history of political intervention and high military restiveness. This began during the authoritarian regime of then President Ferdinand Marcos (1972-86), which in turn co-opted the military to suppress opposition voices (Lim, 2011). The military was subsequently instrumental in ousting President Marcos in 1986 and the corrupt presidency of Joseph Estrada in 2001. Unsuccessful military coups by small factions within the AFP were also launched against President Corazon Aquino (1986-92) and President Gloria Arroyo (2001-10).

The Philippine Constitution states that the AFP is the “protector of the state and the people.”⁴ Over the years, factions within the military – as well as the citizens to some extent – have interpreted this as protection of the state and its people from corrupt and

³ Section 3 of Article 2 (Declaration of Principles and State Policies) and Section 5 of Article XVI (General Provisions) of the 1987 Philippine Constitution.

⁴ Section 3 of Article 2 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution.

incompetent heads of the government (Correa 2015). The aftermath of a disaster tends to show the ineffectiveness of some civilian officials who have been mandated to lead massive HADR operations, but instead relied on the capability of the Philippine military.

Super Typhoon Haiyan as Reference Point of the Study

Super Typhoon Haiyan is the most powerful and devastating weather disturbance that hit the Philippines in recent memory. On 8 November 2013, its strong winds destroyed crops, property, and critical infrastructure such as roads, bridges, and airports. Storm surge waves as high as 6 to 7 meters (equivalent to a two-storey building) flattened coastal communities, claiming thousands of lives.

Super Typhoon Haiyan left a trail of destruction in 44 provinces, 591 municipalities, and 57 cities. According to the NDRRMC, Haiyan's death toll reached 6,300, and economic damages were valued at PhP571 billion (US\$12.9 billion) (National Economic and Development Authority, 2013). Super Typhoon Haiyan, as the first major mega-disaster in the country's recent history, offers lessons that need to be factored into the country's HADR policies, systems, and capacities if the country is to build resilience to such extreme events, which are becoming more frequent.

Map 1



Provinces, towns and cities in central Philippines (including Tacloban City) were the most heavily devastated by Super Typhoon Haiyan. Source of information: Jumamil-Mercado, Gloria, et al, Advances in Civil-Military Coordination in Catastrophes: How the Philippines Turned Lessons Learned from Super Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda) Into Best Practices for Disaster Preparedness and Response (Honolulu: Centre for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance, 2015).

Review of Related Literature

Coordination issues among stakeholders

Several policy reports comprehensively tackle coordination gaps among government agencies, the military, civil society, and international humanitarian agencies during Haiyan. They also highlight the lessons learned from Haiyan and how the application of the lessons can result to effective multi-stakeholder coordination in HADR. According to the 2015 report *Advances in Civil-Military Coordination in Catastrophes: How the Philippines Turned Lessons Learned from Super Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda) into Best Practices for Disaster Preparedness and Response* released by the Centre for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance, much work still lies ahead on ways to synchronize civil-military planning processes to establish a common operational planning framework in the Philippines. However, in crisis situations (where by definition, could not be anticipated), emergency preparedness plans alone are insufficient. This applied research study offers insights on how to enhance surge capacity for large-scale events from the perspective of civil-military coordination (Jumamil-Mercado et al., 2015).

The report highlights three important lessons from Haiyan in 2013, which were applied to improve HADR during Typhoon Hagupit in 2014: (1) a commonly understood hazard warning system, effective risk communication, and an institutionalized forecasting system; (2) the AFP Multinational Coordination Center (MNCC) promoting efficient civilian use of foreign military assets; and (3) when closely coordinated with the government, efforts of the private sector can further strengthen the capacity of the state to prepare the affected population and respond to their needs even before a disaster hits (Ibid.).

However, this report omits the importance of capacity building of local governments in coordinating responders at the local level. According to the discussion paper *The Typhoon Haiyan Response: Strengthening Coordination among Philippine Government, Civil Society, and International Actors*, although the UN cluster system for coordination was adopted at the national level in the Philippines, local governments have neither studied it nor incorporated it into their operations. Local governments often lack necessary skills for response, such as damage and needs assessment. Provincial governments were largely bypassed in the Super Typhoon Haiyan response, although they were mandated to coordinate humanitarian assistance, address gaps, and serve as intermediaries between national and municipal governments, according to Section 12 of the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act. There was an absence of entry and exit protocols for foreign humanitarian workers. A response gap emerged when local governments were overwhelmed in carrying out first responder functions (Dy and Stephens, 2016).

The report argues that, building on experiences from Super Typhoon Haiyan, the government took a more active role during Typhoon Hagupit that resulted in improvements in coordinating humanitarian actors. National authorities and responders had a strong presence in the provincial capital of the affected areas, and coordination among national government agencies was strong. They assessed the scope of the disaster and did not make requests for international assistance. National government agencies controlled the entry of international organisations that began streaming into the affected area (Ibid.). One area Dy

and Stephen (2016) did not investigate is the pre-disaster risk assessment (PDRA) tool which was developed by the government to scientifically assess the potential risks and needs in a certain area at a given time before the disaster hit which can determine if international aid will be needed. An assessment of the impact of the PDRA tool will be covered in Part 3 of this NTS Report.

The need for effective communication

One critical element needed to address coordination gaps is effective communication. As some humanitarian practitioners and disaster scientists assert, affected communities must always be kept informed especially before disaster strikes. According to the paper *A Review of Communicating with Communities Initiatives and Coordination in the Response to Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines* by CDAC (Communicating with Disaster Affected Communities Network), effective humanitarian response requires good two-way communication that offers helpful information and consults communities in dialogue. Good communication backs the participation and revives the dignity of communities affected by crisis, as well as promotes greater transparency and accountability of the aid effort. Following Super Typhoon Haiyan, information and communication access was severely impeded for weeks with 90 per cent of affected people having no access to electricity, equating to no access to communication channels such as print media, TV, or the Internet. Findings suggest that communities affected by Super Typhoon Haiyan felt they needed information to be provided via multiple channels from humanitarian agencies, with personal communication being their strongest preference. The importance of communicating through locally preferred and well-understood channels was highlighted. Communication solely via elected community officials was objectionable for many community members (CDAC Network, 2014).

In its Typhoon Haiyan Update entitled *Communication with Communities* (2014), UN OCHA writes that Communications with Communities or “CwC” is an emerging field of humanitarian preparedness and response that helps meet the information and communication needs of people affected by crises. Communities depend on the traditional way of communication; however some humanitarian workers did not use it. This eventually led to some confusion on their participation specifically during Haiyan aid distribution. It was identified that communities continue to wait for information about shelter and livelihood programs. It recommends that the humanitarian community coordinates to better manage the communities’ expectations to the planned HADR programmes and contribute to increasing the communities’ knowledge about agency mandates. Failure to do so will lead to disappointment and frustration, and will obstruct people's ability to make realistic plans for their recovery (UN OCHA 2014).

In the 2015 report *Coordination Around Communicating with Disaster-Affected Communities: Insights from Typhoon Haiyan*, it was observed that following Super Typhoon Haiyan, information and communication access was severely impeded for weeks, with very little access to communication channels. As part of the response, OCHA deployed CwC staff to coordinate communications with communities in affected areas as well as CwC cross-sectoral working groups to convene local and international NGOs, UN agencies, the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, media development actors, local media, mobile operators,

and the local government, with the aim of coordinating two-way communication across the humanitarian response. The knowledge and experience shared in this forum by national partners contributed to the efficacy of the coordinated communications response, identifying cultural context and connections within communities on which to build (Austin and Bailey, 2015).

The 2015 report argues that effective coordination and engagement between communities, humanitarian responders, and governments (whether local or international) are very important. This will only be possible, however, with commitment and enough resources for effective and consistent communication with, and meaningful engagement of, crisis-affected people in their own response and recovery (Ibid.).

These reports highlight that there has indeed been a need for risk communication, so that those who are vulnerable will be able to understand how and why a particular hazard would impact on them. The government was not able to communicate impact or potential impact of a hazard in a way that people would take proper action. There was also no appreciation of how personal and physical vulnerabilities, and whether potentially affected people have the material resources to evacuate in the first place.

Challenges to Locally Led Humanitarian Response

Central to HADR operations is strengthening capacity of local actors and communities for DRRM. One critical local actor is the local government, mandated to be the first responder in the Philippines but still seem unprepared to design and implement disaster preparedness and response plans.

In its report *Assessment of Disaster Risk Reduction and Management at the Local Level*, the Philippines' Commission on Audit states that foresight and pro-activeness are still the missing critical elements of many DRRM plans by local governments. Many local governments have no reports on communities, teams and managers trained on HADR and no information on training institutions that were established for DRRM. The report suggests that local governments need to assess the risk factors at the community level especially those living in vulnerable areas. They have to finalise their local DRRM plans, enhance local coordination centres for HADR actors, organize community volunteers, and train and equip local responders (Commission on Audit, 2014). This publication highlights the need for local government to better appreciate the existing risks in their jurisdictions. Critical to disaster mitigation and preparedness is identifying inherent disaster risks—potential disaster losses in lives, health status, livelihood assets, and services, which could occur to a particular community or a society over some specified time period. Once the risk assessment is communicated to local governments, as mentioned in this NTS Report, they are mandated to conduct pre-disaster preparations in their jurisdictions based on sound risk analysis. Preparedness includes community organizing, training, planning, equipping, stockpiling, hazard mapping, pre-emptive evacuation and public information and education. Local governments need to be proactive in doing these preparedness activities so as to reduce the need for response and minimise the loss of lives in the aftermath of a disaster.

In the article *Build-Back-Better: Typhoon Haiyan Recovery in the Philippines*, Sudhir Kumar (2015), a disaster risk reduction specialist at the UNDP, explains one impediment to strengthening local-level governance. Social services such as health, social welfare, agriculture and environmental sectors have been delegated to local government units (LGUs) since the passage of the Local Government Code in 1991. However, many LGUs remain reliant on financial subsidies from the national government, i.e., the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA). Distributing roles and responsibilities across layers of government bureaucracy has not progressed much, which results in vague and inefficient assignments. The unclear assignments lead to unfunded obligations, and duplication or even failure of service delivery by government agencies. The national government and development partners will offer technical assistance to LGUs to back the execution of programmes and projects. It can facilitate capacity building for the LGUs and greatly improve the delivery of social services. The enhanced capacity and expertise of the LGUs can lead to expanded post-Haiyan developmental interventions and day-to-day functions of the LGUs (Kumar, 2015).

It echoes what is asserted in the concluding section of this RSIS report on the localisation of HADR, that LGUs need to improve their disaster preparedness and response capacities by improving delivery and monitoring of basic government services at the local level. The localisation of HADR operations can empower communities and make them more resilient, which is elaborated in this report. Several international NGOs in the Philippines such as the Christian Aid UK believe that at the heart of humanitarian actions, communities are not simply beneficiaries; they can be also be proactive actors in the whole humanitarian landscape. Currently, Christian Aid UK helps develop surge capacity not only with and amongst INGOs, but also with and among local partners on the ground. It has currently 20 partner-organisations in the Philippines. They are civil society groups, based in small islands, towns and urban centres, working very closely to residents. Working with local NGOs has distinct advantages for Christian Aid UK. They know the local communities well and where to access services and goods that are needed for the HADR operations of Christian Aid UK.

Civil-military relations

HADR in the Philippines vividly demonstrates civil-military coordination and its essential elements. In the context of the Philippines, civil-military coordination is critical to the security sector reform which seeks to professionalise the AFP and insulate it from politics. In the NTS-Asia Research Paper *The Military Along the Security-Development Frontier: Implications for Non-Traditional Security in the Philippines and Thailand*, Aries Arugay (2012) argues that the militaries of developing countries perform unconventional roles that are not within their core external defence mission. These roles may range from HADR and economic administration to law enforcement and domestic security. While non-traditional security may have expanded the conceptualisation by the military and government of what constitutes a security threat, it does not necessarily mean that the military should dominate the response to the broader range of threats. The military has often had to act to fill the gaps left by the weak and disorganized responses of the civilian government. Non-traditional security also implies that there should be democratic civilian control over the military. Hence, it must be expected that civilian agencies can effectively perform their responsibilities to their constituents (Arugay, 2012). It will be a game changer if the national government provides more resources (budget, logistics, and human resources) to civilian

government agencies which, like the military, are also tasked to conduct HADR operations. Such commensurate budget increases will empower them to lead any HADR operation. This may reduce the civilian authorities' overdependence on the military.

According to the journal article *Civil-Military Relations in Disaster Relief and Rescue Activities: Response to the Mudslide in Southern Leyte, Philippines*, recurring disasters have provided a historical basis for the robust civil-military relations, leading to a clearer acceptance of the following norms: (a) that the military follows policy direction from the civilian authority on deployment, activities, tasking, reporting procedures and timetables (including pullout of troops from the site); and (b) that disaster response, although a secondary military task, is nevertheless vital in meeting the military's strategic goals in the affected area (Hall and Cular, 2010).

The book *Security Sector Reform in the Philippines: Modern Security Forces* claims that the Philippine military, being a veteran in HADR role, is constantly learning through developing denser networks with civil society movements, including NGOs. The military receives policy instructions from local civilian authorities, even the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) with regard to HADR operations (for which the military provides substantial assistance). There is little danger of undermining civilian supremacy in this task, as Filipino soldiers normally respect local government leadership in HADR. What is more significant is the poor condition of the Philippine military's logistical assets (air and landing vehicles) for HADR, which makes the country ever more reliant on foreign logistics assistance for large-scale disasters. In this regard, coordination and linkages with international humanitarian agencies and foreign militaries are crucial (Kiba and Hall, 2014).

One evident gap in these studies on civil military relations is the lack of discussion on civil-military relations in **disaster preparedness and risk mitigation**, which will be discussed further in this RSIS report. Scientists, civilian agencies, NGOs, the private sector and the military should collaborate not only during disaster response but also in disaster risk reduction and mitigation. After Super Typhoon Haiyan, the Philippine government realised the need to shift its HADR framework from merely reactive disaster response to more proactive disaster mitigation and preparedness.

Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief and Civil-Military Coordination During Super Typhoon Haiyan: Issues and Challenges

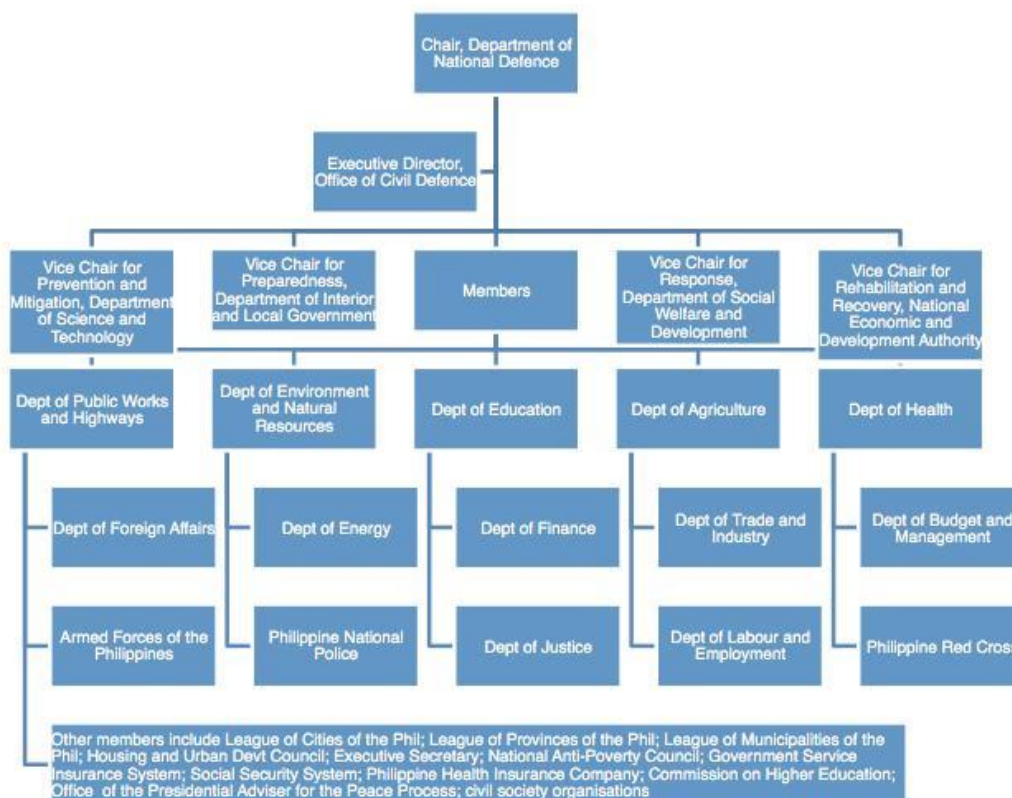
The most important institution in orchestrating HADR in the Philippines is the inter-agency NDRRMC, which has been in place even before Super Typhoon Haiyan. As stipulated in the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010 (Republic Act 10121), among the tasks of the NDRRMC are the development of coordination mechanisms and the identification of activities to achieve coherence in the implementation of disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM) policies. NDRRMC is composed of different departments (ministries) involved in HADR, AFP, representatives from local government units, four representatives from civil society organisations, and a representative from the private sector, among others (**see Chart 1**). It is chaired by the Secretary of National Defence. Its operating arm is the Office of Civil Defence (OCD), under the Department of

National Defence (DND), which is mandated to develop and ensure the implementation of national standards in carrying out disaster risk reduction programs including preparedness, response and rehabilitation works. NDRRMC advises the President on efforts in disaster management undertaken by the government, NGOs and the private sector, thereby serving as the highest policy-making body on disaster management. The NDRRMC is replicated at the regional and local levels, and these bodies function substantially like the NDRRMC, operating and utilising resources at their respective levels (National Disaster Response Plan, 2014).

Based on the recommendation of the NDRRMC, a Proclamation declaring a National State of Calamity was issued on 11 November 2013 by President Benigno S. Aquino III. The proclamation covered areas affected by Super Typhoon Haiyan, including the Samar provinces, Leyte, Cebu, Iloilo, Capiz, Aklan and Palawan. The proclamation was immediately followed by the president’s call for international assistance as recommended by the NDRRMC. President Aquino himself appealed for assistance from both the international community and private sector, as his government worked to rehabilitate hundreds of communities affected by Super Typhoon Haiyan (Dizon, 2013; Reuters, 2013). However, it must be noted that while the Philippines called for international aid and indeed received foreign aid, including from ASEAN countries, its government did not submit the form formally requesting foreign assistance to ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre).

Chart 1

Members of the NDRRMC



Source: National Disaster Response Plan, (Quezon City: National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council, 2014).

Absence of disaster response plan and coordination

The Philippine government was overwhelmed by the herculean task of undertaking Search and Rescue (SAR) operations and providing immediate humanitarian relief and assistance to typhoon victims in the scattered islands. The challenge proved to be beyond the capacity of local and national officials, primarily due to the absence of a comprehensive disaster response plan, despite the fact that the country has always been hit by disasters. Indeed, the day after the typhoon flattened the city of Tacloban, the worst affected area in the country, it emerged that their first responders – the local authorities – were themselves victims of the disaster. Given the void at the local level, national authorities were forced to step in. However, there appeared to be no clear chain of command to coordinate relief efforts by various government agencies, local and foreign humanitarian groups (Anthony, Trajano and Amul, 2013). What was lacking was the synergy and coordination among responding government agencies which were separately performing their respective functions.⁵

As international organisations flooded these communities, they took different approaches in coordinating with the municipal governments. Most civil society organisations did not have formal partnerships with local governments as they viewed the government as out of touch with civil society needs and not visible enough in the early response. This made it challenging for local governments to know which organisations were operating in their jurisdiction. Meanwhile, much of the private sector's efforts before Super Typhoon Haiyan were intermittent, sporadic, and largely reactive to the onslaught of natural disasters. During Super Typhoon Haiyan, HADR activities of private companies were conducted without a unified business-led platform (Jumamil-Mendoza, et al, 2015).

Clearly, the absence of a comprehensive disaster response plan and a system of coordinating all stakeholders delayed the delivery of relief items. There was a need to come up with a set of action plans and protocols observed and followed by all responders to make the HADR operations more systematic and to avoid duplication of relief missions. The Super Typhoon Haiyan response highlighted how adequate investment in disaster preparedness might have prevented the loss of so many lives. A comprehensive disaster response plan should have been institutionalised to include preparation plans, especially at the local level, that would assess the risks in a particular area.

Lack of pre-disaster risk assessment and science-based risk communication

The Republic Act 10121 of 2010 requires the development of assessment tools on the existing and potential hazards and risks brought about by climate change, the study of local risk pattern across the country, and strengthening of the capacities of communities and local governments for disaster risk reduction (OCD, NDRRMC, 2014). However, three years after the passage of the Act and before Super Typhoon Haiyan, pre-disaster risk assessment

⁵ Interview with Alexander Pama, former Executive Director of NDRMMC and former Director of the Office of Civil Defence, Department of National Defence, Taguig City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 20 July 2016.

was not yet done and affected communities were caught unaware of the potential risks from a super typhoon.

With regard to “storm surge” generated by Super Typhoon Haiyan, the government and the weather forecasting agency failed to communicate the severity of its impact to the general public. Many considered the storm surge as just another one of the 20 recurring storms of the year. Consequently, hundreds died in evacuation centres and in vulnerable communities destroyed by storm surges. Storm surge warnings alone proved inadequate without taking into account the variability of coastal landscape to accurately appraise the extent of the potential disaster zone (Jumamil-Mercado, 2015). Vulnerable residents might have received the warnings on tsunami-like storm surges and were told to evacuate but hundreds of them died as their evacuation centers were apparently located in danger zones and inundated by the storm surge. Indeed, risk communication from the government to local communities was inadequate which resulted in many casualties.

Extensive Utilisation of the AFP

The Philippine military was extensively utilised during Super Typhoon Haiyan. Regional military unified commands involved during the Haiyan response were Central Command, Eastern Mindanao Command, Western Command, Southern Luzon Command, with a total of 25,000 military personnel. Haiyan highlighted not only the Philippines' extreme vulnerability to natural disasters, it also revealed how the military's limited resources hampered its ability to respond quickly and adequately to such a catastrophe. The military, notwithstanding the limitation of its capability, has more strategic lift with its C130s, utility helicopters, trucks, and navy ships,⁶ which are very important in transporting the much needed relief items, if compared to other civilian agencies tasked to conduct HADR operations.⁷

The creation of Multinational Coordinating Council (MNCC) by the AFP

The MNCC was established several days after Super Typhoon Haiyan to coordinate the deployment of 21 foreign militaries and their assets, which was described as one of the most complex international relief operations in the Asia-Pacific, the (Jumamil-Mercado, 2015). It started as a Command Coordination Center (CCC) based on the approved bilateral mechanism on HADR cooperation with the US.⁸ It was the US which first provided logistical assistance to the AFP. The delay in the setting up of the MNCC frustrated the quick delivery of the relief items to far flung areas (Jumamil-Mercado, 2015).

Eventually, there was a need to convert CCC to MNCC to accommodate the growing list of foreign militaries that were providing assistance to the Philippines. The MNCC was

⁶ Due to national security concerns, the AFP does not release official figures of its available logistical assets.

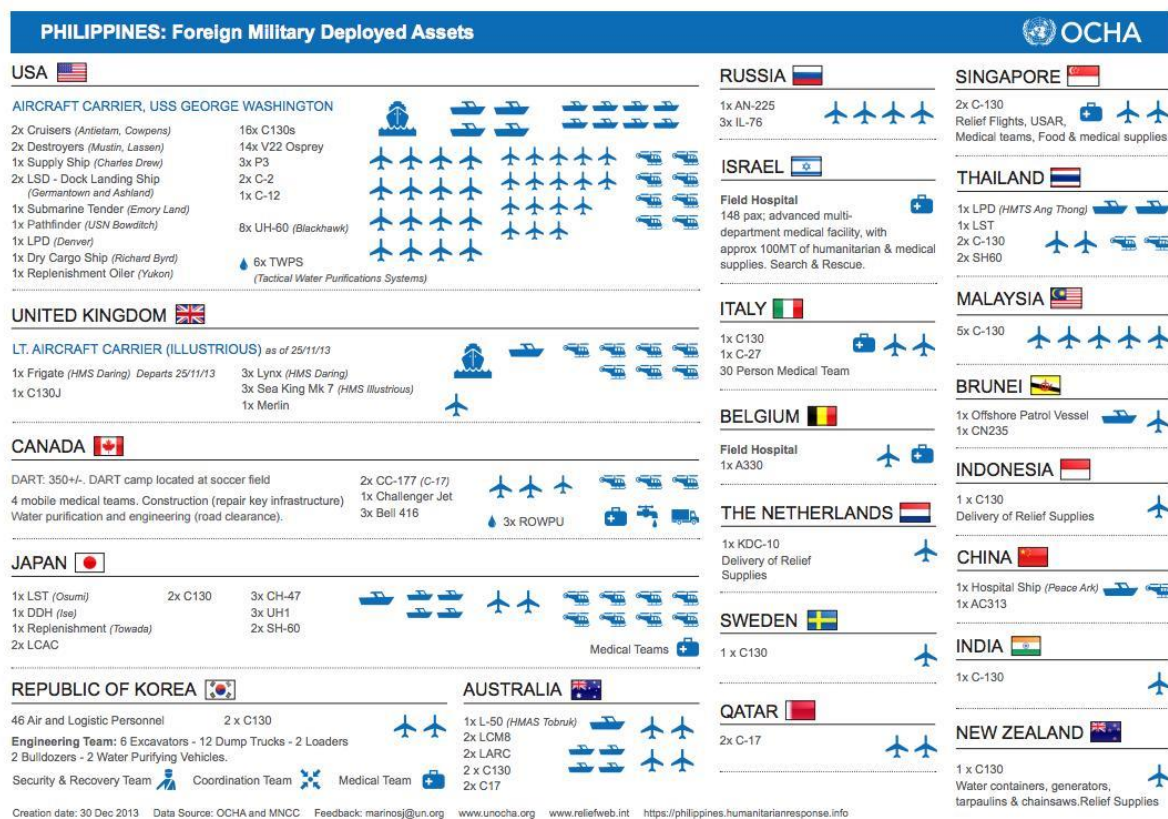
⁷ Interview with Francis Alaurin, Colonel and Head of Strategic Studies Division, Office of Strategic Studies and Strategy Management, AFP, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 20 July 2016.

⁸ Interview with a high-ranking official of the AFP, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 22 July 2016.

organised at the Mactan Airbase, Cebu Province in the central Philippines. The MNCC entailed a collaborative planning and execution mechanism that prioritised the enormous needs with the available capabilities from the militaries. One initial challenge was the absence of coordinating mechanism for international responders, hence there was a need to first develop how to receive and coordinate with them. At the MNCC, a one-stop shop was established to receive and process all necessary travel and clearance documents from international responders, while nightly ad-hoc briefings with all foreign military commanders were initially conducted in the first few days until the briefings became regular daily coordination meetings. Through the MNCC, the deployment of foreign militaries with their C130s and other logistical assets became systematic, organised and quick which accelerated the delivery of relief items and evacuation of survivors in the affected areas.⁹ It was demonstrated that the optimal use of defence assets should be best coordinated through the MNCC, an important lesson derived from the Haiyan responses (Jumamil-Mercado, et al., 2015).

Figure 1

Foreign Military Deployed Assets in the Philippines in December 2013



Source: Reliefweb, Philippines: Foreign Military Deployed Assets, December 2013.

⁹ Interview with a high-ranking official of the AFP, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 22 July 2016.

Weak Locally Led HADR Operations

On the ground, while local government officials were supposed to be the first responders, in many cases and in reality, it is the military – given its training and manpower, and the massive logistical demands of operations – that filled the gaps. The military also observed that several local officials were repacking relief items from foreign donors to claim undue political credit. There was also politicking involved in some requests of local officials to use military mobility assets and claimed undue credit too.¹⁰

Although the cluster system was adopted at the national level in the Philippines, local governments had not yet learned about it or incorporated it into their operations. Instead, some local governments developed ad-hoc arrangements to suit their needs in the moment and then meshed those systems with the international clusters.¹¹ At the time of Haiyan, the cluster system was institutionalized at the national and regional government levels, but the system had not been replicated successfully at the local levels (Dy and Stephens, 2016).

Indeed, various structural and coordinating challenges to HADR were highlighted in the aftermath of Super Typhoon Haiyan. These became lessons for the government, particularly for the OCD and NDRRMC, which helped them identify the causes of bottlenecks in the delivery of disaster relief. Consequently, they introduced major reforms not only to improve the disaster response but to institutionalise disaster preparedness mechanisms.

Major Reforms to HADR and Civil-Military Coordination (Post-Haiyan – 2016)

Learning from Haiyan and adhering to the 2005 Hyogo Framework of Action¹² and the Republic Act 10121 (Philippine Disaster Risk and Management Act of 2010), the Philippine government changed its focus from merely reactive disaster response to more proactive disaster prevention, mitigation and preparedness.

¹⁰ Interview with Francis Alaurin, Colonel and Head of Strategic Studies Division, Office of Strategic Studies and Strategy Management, AFP, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 20 July 2016.

¹¹ Clusters are groups of humanitarian organisations (UN and non-UN) working in the main sectors of humanitarian action, e.g. shelter and health. They are created when clear humanitarian needs exist within a sector, when there are numerous actors within sectors and when national authorities need coordination support. Clusters provide a clear point of contact and are accountable for adequate and appropriate humanitarian assistance. Clusters create partnerships between international humanitarian actors, national and local authorities, and civil society (OCHA, n.d.).

¹² Hyogo Framework of Action, 2005. <http://www.unisdr.org/2005/wcdr/intergover/official-doc/L-docs/Hyogo-framework-for-action-english.pdf>.

National Disaster Response Plan

One significant reform initiated by the Philippine government after Super Typhoon Haiyan was the National Disaster Response Plan (NDRP). The NDRRMC approved a much-needed general disaster response plan for the government in June 2014, seven months after Super Typhoon Haiyan devastated many communities in the central Philippines. The NDRP is a strategic action plan of the Philippine government to prepare and provide response assistance for all disasters. The OCD, in consultation with NDRRMC member-agencies developed the NDRP. It outlines the processes and mechanisms to facilitate a coordinated response by the national and/or at the local level departments/agencies. Local governments are responsible for the development and improvement of local disaster preparedness and response plans relative to their areas of responsibility and underlying risks. In the aftermath of Super Typhoon Haiyan, the government realised the extreme importance of close coordination among all humanitarian responders, government bodies, military, private sector, and NGOs. Consequently, the primary objective of NDRP is to ensure the effective and coordinated response to hazard-causing disasters by the national government at all levels including its instrumentalities through providing support assistance to the affected areas and local governments. The NDRP embraces all conceivable contingencies, making use of all available resources from government, local non-NGOs, INGOs, military, and private sector (National Disaster Response Plan, 2014).

There are four thematic areas in the NDRRMC and each area is led by a department and assisted by member-agencies: (i) **Preparedness** is chaired by the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG); (ii) **Response** is headed by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD); (iii) **Prevention and Mitigation** is led by the Department of Science and Technology (DOST); and (iv) **Rehabilitation and Recovery** is chaired by the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA). However, according to the former Executive Director of NDRRMC and former Undersecretary of the Department of National Defence, Alexander Pama, prior to Super Typhoon Haiyan the government agencies leading the four thematic areas, together with other member-agencies of NDRRMC, were merely performing their respective individual functions. Rather what was lacking in the aftermath of Super Typhoon Haiyan was the synergy and collaboration between the different agencies. Therefore, learning from Super Typhoon Haiyan, the government realised that it needed to strengthen the synergy and coordination among all those agencies involved in HADR including the AFP and enhance the participation of other stakeholders such as humanitarian NGOs, civil society groups, and the private sector.¹³

It is important to note that despite many disasters that have hit the Philippines in recent decades, it was only after Super Typhoon Haiyan that the government recognised the extreme importance of coordination, buy-in and participation of all HADR stakeholders in the country. The lesson from Super Typhoon Haiyan, i.e., the lack of coordination, pushed the government to facilitate multi-stakeholder cooperation in all aforementioned thematic areas. In this regard, the NDRP facilitates collaboration networks that are necessary to

¹³ Interview with Alexander Pama, former Executive Director of NDRRMC and Undersecretary of the Department of National Defence, Taguig City, Metro, Manila, Philippines, 20 July 2016.

remove traditional institutional barriers and facilitate the sharing of information among NDRRMC member-agencies. The NDRP envisions having a close and effective coordination, collaboration, communication and cooperation (4Cs) among all concerned responding government agencies and NGOs (National Disaster Response Plan, 2014).

The new HADR cluster system and the role of the military

The NDRP also introduced a revitalised cluster system in post-Haiyan settings initiated by the then National Disaster Coordinating Council (the forerunner of NDRRMC) in 2008. It was originally aimed at harmonizing the activities of the UN humanitarian agencies with the identified Philippine government agencies (National Disaster Response Plan, 2014). However, the cluster approach to the disaster response operations of government agencies was only later adopted and internalized in post-Haiyan period. With the cluster system, it is now clear which particular government office can be called upon to do specific tasks.¹⁴ In order to have a seamless coordination system, changes were made in the cluster system to make NDRP more responsive to the needs of the responding government agencies including the military in their post-Haiyan HADR operations. This is an indication of a global norm (i.e., the United Nations cluster system) being localised to suit the needs of the country. One of the major changes was the creation of two separate clusters for Search, Rescue and Retrieval (SRR) and Management of the Dead and Missing (MDM) (National Disaster Response Plan, 2014).

In the NDRP, civil –military coordination is further advanced through the cluster system. The AFP/military is the lead agency for the SRR Cluster while other civilian agencies with search and rescue capabilities such as the Philippine National Police, Philippine Coast Guard, Bureau of Fire and Protection, LGUs as well as the Philippine Red Cross are members of this cluster.¹⁵ The SRR cluster provides support for effective, timely, organised and systematic search, rescue and retrieval operations to affected areas in all emergencies to further minimise loss of lives and casualties, including the hand- over of casualties to the Health Cluster for proper treatment and management. This military-led cluster coordinates and deploys all available SAR teams from the government, civil society, private sector and the international community (National Disaster Response Plan, 2014). As explained by Brigadier General Restituto Padilla Jr, the AFP Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Civil Military Operations, the AFP sees itself as the country’s most robust first responder that can provide the needed manpower and logistical equipment for HADR operations. More importantly, military units are also deployed all over the country, facilitating the AFP’s availability to prepare for and respond to a disaster in any part of the country.¹⁶

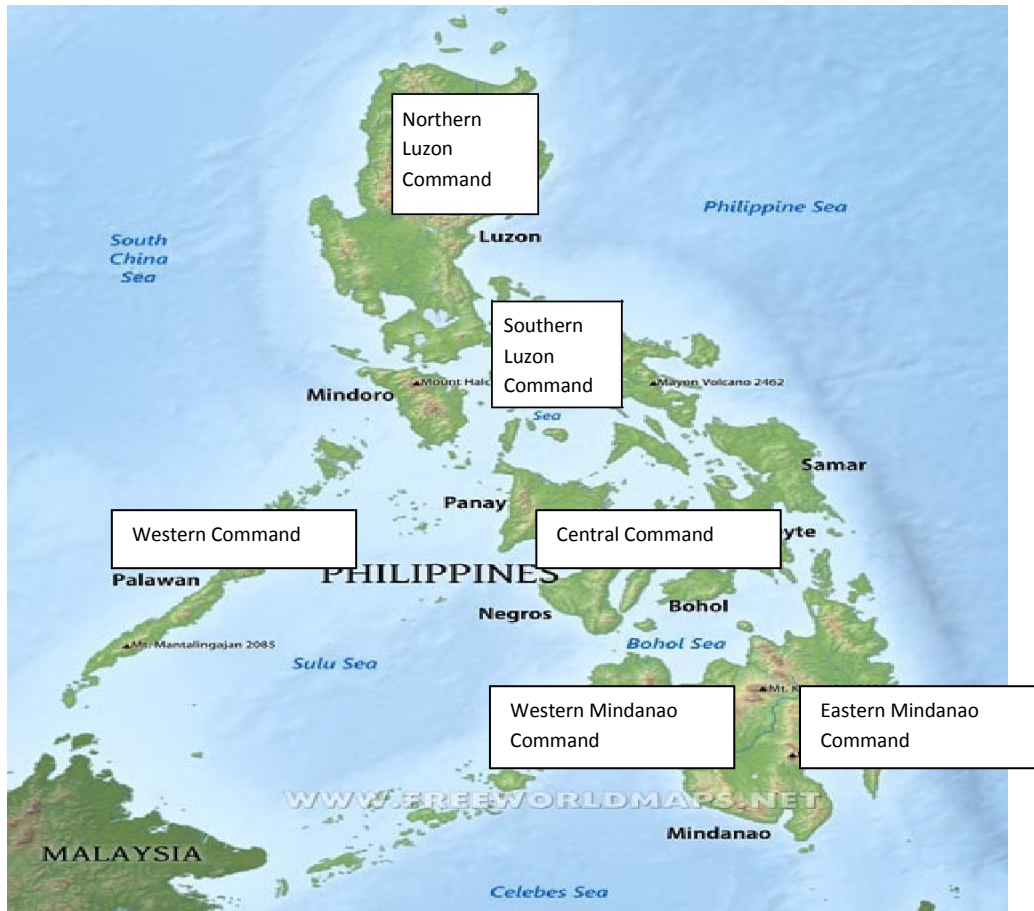
¹⁴ Interview with Alexander Pama, former Executive Director of NDRMMC and former Director of the Office of Civil Defence, Department of National Defence, Taguig City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 20 July 2016.

¹⁵ Interview with Restituto Padilla, Jr., Brigadier General and Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Civil Military Operations, J7 AFP, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 20 July 2016.

¹⁶ Ibid.

Map 2

The Unified Commands of the Armed Forces of the Philippines



Source of information: Interview with Restituto Padilla, Jr., Brigadier General and Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Civil Military Operations, J7 AFP, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 20 July 2016.

In the conduct of disaster response operations, the AFP adopts the force-provider and force-employer concept. In this concept of operations, the major services of the AFP namely, the Philippine Army, the Philippine Navy with the Philippine Marines, and the Philippine Air Force, are the providers of forces (personnel and logistics). The AFP's six Unified Commands, which are located all over the country (see Map 1), employ many of the units of the Army, Air Force, and the Navy. The combined forces from the three major services of the AFP comprise the disaster response units in each of the six Unified Commands under which they are organised, trained and equipped for HADR operations. The Unified Commands provide the command and control in the directions of all disaster response operations at the operational and tactical levels. The Unified Commands utilise their forward deploy assets

from the different AFP units assigned to them that have special disaster response capabilities.¹⁷

One important operational reform of the AFP in post-Haiyan period is the activation of one battalion each for the Army, Air Force and Navy, fully equipped and dedicated for HADR missions. The military has now three battalions ready for deployment. However, the reality about the typhoons and any disasters is that they can strike in any part of the country. The three battalions may not yet be immediately available in the communities where the disaster occurs. And the military does not usually bring the three battalions to where the catastrophe is. Hence, it is important that infantry units or local military units nationwide are equipped with at least the basic logistical equipment to clear major thoroughfares of fallen debris to pave the way for humanitarian workers and relief goods.¹⁸ The AFP also now conducts humanitarian assistance and disaster response exercises (HADR X). The HADR X focuses on Joint Operations Planning and Simulated Execution of the SRR Operations of the AFP. AFP soldiers undergo Flood Incident and Response Training (FIRST), Emergency Response Training (ERT) and Incident Command System (ICS) (AFP, 2015).

The military sees HADR as an opportunity to further advance civil-military cooperation and coordination and to reinforce its linkages with civilian government agencies and the people at a time that they most need the military.¹⁹ For the AFP, in contrast to how the military functions in developed countries, its mission would always be diverted from traditional military functions to an assignment that will make the AFP more relevant to the enormous needs and priorities of the Filipinos and the state such as in HADR which is now one of the four mission areas of the AFP.²⁰

The HADR thrust of the AFP is stipulated in the AFP Transformation Roadmap. In this Roadmap which articulates **The AFP Vision 2028**, the AFP aspires to be a world-class military that can be a source of national pride. To emphasise that the military is gearing towards HADR, the Roadmap states that HADR is a core mission that the military needs to attend to. As stated in the Roadmap, the military's goal is to increase the operational readiness of its HADR national response units from 64 per cent in 2013 when Super Typhoon Haiyan struck to 80 per cent by 2028. Given that the AFP is now more expected to provide support and assistance to responding government agencies before, during and after a disaster, the AFP has strived harder to increase the operational readiness of each of its HADR units. How close is the AFP in realising this goal? According to the AFP Office of Strategic Studies and Strategy Management, this goal has already been achieved as of 2016 given that the HADR operational readiness of major AFP response units has been increased: the Fleet Marine Ready Force of the Philippines Navy achieved 87 per cent operational readiness; the

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Interview with Francis Alaurin, Colonel and Head of Strategic Studies Division, Office of Strategic Studies and Strategy Management, AFP, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 20 July 2016.

¹⁹ Interview with Restituto Padilla, Jr., Brigadier General and Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Civil Military Operations, J7 AFP, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 20 July 2016.

²⁰ The four mission areas of the AFP are (1) Internal Security; (2) HADR; (3) Territorial Defence; (4) International Defence and Security Engagement. Interview with Francis Alaurin, Colonel and Head of Strategic Studies Division, Office of Strategic Studies and Strategy Management, AFP, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 20 July 2016.

505th Search and Rescue Group of the Philippine Air Force 82 per cent; and 525th Engineering Battalion of the Philippine Army achieved 80 per cent readiness.²¹

Aside from being the lead agency for the SRR cluster operations, the AFP provides much needed assistance to the inter-agency NDRRMC to foster civil-military coordination.²² The AFP, for instance, has assisted other clusters of the NDRRMC, particularly the Logistics Cluster. This cluster is led by the OCD of the Department of National Defence while the AFP is one of its member-agencies. The military is mandated to provide the necessary capabilities to support the logistical necessities of the different clusters, along with the security requirements to the Logistics Cluster, in coordination with the NDRRMC. The AFP is expected to contribute emergency transport by operating its aircrafts, vehicles, and vessels, based on needs and requests from NDRRMC and affected local governments (National Disaster Response Plan, 2014). The military actively cooperates and works with local governments through the regional, provincial, city, and municipal DRRMCs in the conduct of disaster response operations.²³

Apart from active participation in disaster response operations, the military also assists other government agencies in the three other thematic areas of HADR in the Philippines. For **Preparedness** operations, the prepositioning of food and non-food items in potential disaster-prone areas may be achieved by utilising the AFP's logistical assets or if surge capacity of personnel is needed, the AFP can tap its regular forces and mobilise its reservists. The local military units can be tasked to disseminate early warnings and advisories in isolated areas. A case in point is the military's proactive engagement with the local government of the Province of Albay, where the number of casualties has been declining in recent years. If there is an oncoming typhoon or heavy downpour of rain that may cause landslides and flash floods, the military is one of the most reliable partners of this province in evacuating many of the residents living in high risk areas. During the **Prevention and Mitigation** phase, engineering units of the AFP can be tasked to construct the much-needed infrastructure such as dikes and other flood mitigation structures. During the **Rehabilitation and Recovery** phase, the military's engineering units again may be tasked to rebuild communities and infrastructure such as houses, schools, roads and bridges.²⁴

Facilitating enhanced coordination

The extent of the devastation wrought by Super Typhoon Haiyan necessitated the participation of many local and international humanitarian responders, including national and local government bodies, the AFP, foreign militaries, local and foreign NGOs, ASEAN, foreign aid agencies, and UN humanitarian agencies, among others. Facilitating coordination among these actors was a challenge because local governments were given the

²¹ Interview with Francis Alaurin, Colonel and Head of Strategic Studies Division, Office of Strategic Studies and Strategy Management, AFP, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 20 July 2016.

²² Interview with Restituto Padilla, Jr., Brigadier General and Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Civil Military Operations, J7 AFP, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 20 July 2016.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

responsibility to lead but did not have the capacity and technical knowledge to do so (Commission on Audit, 2014). Since Super Typhoon Haiyan, operational mechanisms have been introduced or reinvigorated, primarily by the Philippine military, to facilitate coordination.

AFP Civil-Military Coordinating Centre

Central to military operations in HADR situations is the AFP Civil-Military Coordinating Centre (CMCC). The AFP CMCC facilitates inter-agency coordination between the military and other responding government agencies and offers collaboration with local NGOs assisting disaster response. The AFP CMCC operates in the context of an HADR operation that is internal to the Philippines and does not involve any other foreign players. It becomes the AFP's focal point for facilitating cooperation with other government agencies. For instance, other agencies may not have the capability to bring relief items to affected areas while the AFP has the logistical assets to do that. The agencies' request for transport assistance will be coursed through the NDRRMC. Once the request has been approved by the NDRRMC, the task is delegated to the military-led SRR cluster which has, within it, a connection to the CMCC. The AFP CMCC then carries out the approved request from the civilian agency.²⁵

The AFP is mandated to provide security and transportation to responding NGOs. But this needs prior coordination with the military so that it can allocate its resources beforehand. During disasters, this becomes critical because its forces are deployed for many of its response activities. The military needs to ensure that NGOs coming to conflict areas are protected.²⁶

Some humanitarian organisations such as the Philippine Red Cross (PRC) and Christian Aid UK are very careful in collaborating with the AFP because if there is a conflict situation involving the military and non-state armed groups, they refrain from utilising military resources as they abide by the humanitarian principles of neutrality and impartiality.²⁷ For instance, in peacetime, there is no problem for the PRC to use military transport assets. In fact, the PRC utilised military assets to deploy its humanitarian relief workers and relief items during Super Typhoon Haiyan. However, the PRC had to queue to use C130s. Learning from its experience during Super Typhoon Haiyan, the PRC is now investing in more logistical assets. It acquired its own brand-new humanitarian transport ship worth US\$1.8 million in 2016 which can accommodate ten trucks and can dock anywhere without a port.²⁸

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Interview with Brian Kae Enriquez and an officer of the Emergency Operations Centre, Philippine Red Cross, Mandaluyong City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 19 July 2016; Interview with Jessica Dator Dercilla, Regional Advocacy Head of Christian Aid UK in the Philippines, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 22 July 2016.

²⁸ Interview with Brian Kae Enriquez and an officer of the Emergency Operations Centre, Philippine Red Cross, Mandaluyong City, Metro Manila, 19 July 2016.

Multinational Coordinating Centre (MNCC)

In the context of HADR operations that involved foreign militaries, the AFP established the MNCC, which figured prominently in the lessons that the Philippines learned from Haiyan. This is one clear difference from what was previously absent before and during Super Typhoon Haiyan. Prior to the setting up of an MNCC, there were no coordinating mechanisms for the international responders, even for foreign militaries.²⁹ It is part of the AFP task force to facilitate coordination with other militaries which have offered assistance and have been allowed to operate in the Philippines for HADR.³⁰ It is a collaborative planning and execution mechanism between the AFP and foreign militaries that prioritises the need with the available capabilities of foreign militaries. Since large-scale HADR operations cover several provinces and regions, entailing air, naval, and security operations, the MNCC develops comprehensive plans for such operations.³¹

The first time the MNCC was reactivated after Super Typhoon Haiyan was before the onset of Typhoon Hagupit, which was predicted to be as devastating as Super Typhoon Haiyan threatening the same area in central Philippines, in 2014 and might therefore require foreign military assistance. As evidence that the AFP has learned from Super Typhoon Haiyan, particularly the importance of preparing the coordination mechanism, the high-ranking AFP officer who was instrumental in establishing MNCC after Super Typhoon Haiyan delivered a lecture on MNCC processes to relevant AFP officers who were assigned to manage the MNCC even before Typhoon Hagupit hit the country.³² As a response to Typhoon Hagupit, the AFP re-established the MNCC at Camp Aguinaldo³³ in Quezon City to coordinate incoming foreign military assets. Offers of assistance were received from Australia, Brunei, Canada, China, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, the United Kingdom and the United States (Centre for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance, 2014). A further example of the institutionalisation of the lessons from MNCC is the inclusion of the HADR coordination and inter-operability to the Philippine-US *Balikatan* joint military exercises. For other allies of the Philippines, such as Australia and Japan,³⁴ when they work with the *Balikatan* framework, they conduct exercises with the MNCC procedure.³⁵

²⁹ Interview with a high-ranking official of the AFP, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 22 July 2016

³⁰ Interview with Restituto Padilla, Jr., Brigadier General and Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Civil Military Operations, J7 AFP, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 20 July 2016.

³¹ Interview with a high-ranking official of the AFP, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 22 July 2016.

³² Ibid.

³³ Camp Aguinaldo is the general headquarters of the AFP, located in Quezon City, Metro Manila.

³⁴ The existing military agreements of the Philippines with its allies are the following:

A. Mutual Defense Treaty Between the Republic of the Philippines and the United States of America (MDT, 1951) which formalizes the treaty alliance of the US and the Philippines; The Philippines–United States Visiting Forces Agreement (1999) which allows the *Balikatan* exercises between the American and Filipino soldiers; and the Enhanced Defense and Cooperation Agreement (EDCA, 2014) between the United States and the Philippines which states that the US can rotate troops into the Philippines for extended stays and is allowed to build and operate facilities on Philippine bases.

B. The Philippine-Australia Status of Visiting Forces Agreement (SOVFA, signed in 2007 and entered into force in 2012): This is a bilateral visiting forces agreement between the governments allowing Australian troops to temporarily be stationed within the country.

Civil-Military Coordinating Centre

Closely partnering with MNCC is the Civil-Military Coordinating Centre (CMCC) which is the direct link of the AFP to other international NGOs and UN humanitarian organisations that have special requirements that entail the use of military assets. The AFP follows the UN Civil Military Coordination (UN CMCoord) concept because it is closely aligned with UN practices in terms of coordination between the military and NGOs.

Another major innovation from the national government is the adoption of the International Humanitarian Assistance Concept as a policy. This has been considered as a global norm in the conduct of HADR which has also been adopted and localised by the Philippines after Super Typhoon Haiyan to smoothen the entry of foreign humanitarian organisations. It specifies that the government is to form one-stop shops to process the entry of international organisations when they arrive. This is based on the lessons learned from Super Typhoon Haiyan that there was a need for seamless and fast coordination with foreign humanitarian workers to facilitate their entry to the Philippines and be deployed immediately.³⁶

Private Sector Cooperation thru the PDRF

The Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation (PDRF) is the country's major private sector vehicle and coordinator for disaster management. Backed by the country's largest conglomerates, industrial and top corporate leaders, it is the critical link of the private sector with the government, military and civil society. After Super Typhoon Haiyan, PDRF began focusing on response and recovery programmes. Then a few years later, the PDRF realised that in order for it to be able to help the business community respond to and prepare for disasters, it has to focus now on the preparedness, prevention and mitigation aspects.

In this regard, the PDRF has set three main goals. The first goal is to enhance coordination and collaboration before, during and after a disaster. It has set up its own emergency operations centre. It observed that right after Super Typhoon Haiyan, there was no efficient way of providing relief goods and responding to the needs of the victims. Hence, PDRF sees the need to coordinate and collaborate among HADR stakeholders to be able to have a more robust way of managing disasters. For the PDRF, coordination means partnering not just with the business sector but also with governments and local and international organisations. Its member-companies have been able to donate disaster-resilient

C. Strategic Partnership with Japan (2015), this is the acting prelude document leading up to a VFA that still needs Senate Approval.

³⁵ Interview with a high-ranking official of the AFP, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 22 July 2016.

³⁶ Interview with Restituto Padilla, Jr., Brigadier General and Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Civil Military Operations, J7 AFP, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 20 July 2016.

evacuation centres which can be used as classrooms during normal times as well as modern e-health centres in Haiyan-affected communities.³⁷

The second goal is for member companies of the PDRF to invest in disaster resilience strategies. In normal times, the emergency operations center would function as a training facility to conduct joint planning and exercises. Located with easy access to road networks, seaports, airports, and warehouses, a dedicated operations team would work fulltime to promote disaster preparedness among business members and partners (Jumamil-Mercado, et al, 2015). The third goal is to strengthen the preparedness of the small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Most of the PDRF members are big companies, but the PDRF believes that big companies are as effective only as the strength of the supply chain and small and medium-sized enterprises. In collaboration with the Department of Trade and Industry, PDRF conducts business continuity workshops for SMEs so that they can quickly recover and revive the supply chain for PDRF's member-companies.³⁸

Through the PDRF's activities and paradigm shift from response to disaster preparedness and mitigation, the private sector can indeed be an active partner of government in HADR given its financial resources and expertise. Due to the failure in risk governance on the part of the government, especially local governments, the private sector is stepping into this humanitarian space. HADR does not simply end with delivering relief as there is a need to address long term socio-economic development issues in order to reduce the vulnerabilities of poor communities including community-based entrepreneurs.³⁹ Evidently, the government and NGOs would need the private sector to jointly address these issues and to restore sources of livelihoods in affected communities. As the private sector now actively participates in HADR in the Philippines, the government needs to provide a platform where all humanitarian actors, including the private sector, can all synergise their humanitarian efforts primarily to identify and reduce the risks to vulnerable communities.

Pre-Disaster Risk Assessment

One important innovation developed by the OCD is the Pre-Disaster Risk Assessment (PDRA) to avoid the repeat of Haiyan-like devastation. It was signed by the Chairman of NDRRMC, then Defence Secretary Voltaire Gazmin on 18 August 2014. To improve the HADR in the Philippines, OCD and NDRMMC institutionalised PDRA as an action plan that will further enhance the disaster risk reduction mechanism of the Philippines as it moves one step ahead of a likely disaster (OCD, NDRRMC, 2014).

PDRA is a process to assess a hazard's level of risk given the degree of exposure and vulnerability in a specific area. PDRA is a context specific and time-bound risk assessment

³⁷ Interview with an official of Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation, Makati City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 22 July 2016.

³⁸ Interview with an official of the Department of Trade and Industry, Makati City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 19 July 2016; Interview with an official of Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation, Makati City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 22 July 2016.

³⁹ Interview with an official of the Department of Trade and Industry, Makati City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 19 July 2016

tool that focuses on a particular hazard and associated risks in a particular area given a certain time. From which, information is derived and action plans are carried out according to the timeframe. Through the PDRA questions such as, but not limited to: “what is the potential hazard?” “Where are the areas that will be affected?” “What is the potential impact?” and, “where are the safe areas for evacuation?” can be answered.⁴⁰ As such, it is the primary tool used by the government and military to evacuate populations they consider can be in harm’s way. Learning from Haiyan, OCD argued that a system was needed to synergise the activities of all agencies working on the four thematic areas on HADR to achieve a common vision; hence, OCD came up with the PDRA. The thematic areas “may overlap each other to attain our vision of safer, adaptive and resilient country” (OCD, NDRRMC, 2014).

One key thematic area in the PDRA is **Prevention and Mitigation** led by the DOST. Hence, the government viewed that there was a need to improve weather forecasting by the government. The logic here is that the appropriate **disaster response**, and to some extent, the **rehabilitation and recovery** thematic areas will be dependent on the forecasting and pre-disaster risk assessment. The first thematic area team will relay the forecast and the risk assessment to **Preparedness** team of agencies led by the DILG. The agencies’ focal persons would all be in a coordinated meeting, sharing all the necessary pieces of information. In the case of NDRMMC, it coordinates, supervises, directs, orchestrates, and synergises all these various HADR activities primarily focused on preparedness. When the preparation is appropriate to the projected time, location and kind of hazard, it will result in a more efficient disaster response.⁴¹

One important case to illustrate the utility of enhancing forecasting and pre-disaster risk assessment is Typhoon Hagupit which hit central Philippines in December 2014, a year after Super Typhoon Haiyan devastated the same region. The forecasting capability of the government was vastly improved with Project NOAH (Nationwide Operational Assessment of Hazards), a prevention and mitigation project of DOST, and modernisation of the state weather agency PAGASA (Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration). NOAH’s mission is to undertake disaster science R&D and to advance the use of cutting edge technologies and recommend innovative information services in government’s disaster prevention and mitigation efforts.⁴² PAGASA, with its newly acquired state-of-the art equipment, released the strength, movement and location of Typhoon Hagupit every six hours. Meanwhile, NOAH provided storm surge models using high resolution maps of municipalities that were likely to hit by storms surges. This represents a key lesson from Super Typhoon Haiyan which generated storm surges that largely flattened many communities. As a result of accurate forecasting and PDRA, preparedness activities became appropriate to the type of oncoming hazard. Prior to Typhoon Hagupit’s onslaught,

⁴⁰ Interview with Alexander Pama, former Executive Director of NDRMMC and former Director of the Office of Civil Defence, Department of National Defence, Taguig City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 20 July 2016.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Project NOAH’s hazard maps are produced with computer simulations that reflect flood-prone areas discernible at a local scale or community level. Such maps are necessary for localized emergency response, identification of evacuation and access routes, road closures during disaster events, siting of key rescue facilities and comprehensive land use planning. For further details, please visit <http://noah.dost.gov.ph/p/about>.

the Philippines implemented one of its largest-ever peacetime evacuations: 800,000 people were evacuated and placed in 81 evacuation centres. The government's disaster response equipment, emergency workers and relief aid items were also prepositioned to ensure prompt post-typhoon relief assistance. As a result of massive typhoon preparedness, there were no massive casualties during the onslaught of Typhoon Hagupit with only 18 deaths.

The PDRA, indeed, became a baseline for cluster response operations and communications. For the first time, the government achieved a nationwide consensus on the operating environment (Jumamil-Mercado, 2015). PDRA has changed the HADR approach of the government from being reactive to be more prepared and proactive. According to the pioneer of PDRA, former Undersecretary Pama who was also a retired chief of the Philippine Navy, the paradigm shift after Haiyan entails "managing the consequences by managing the conflict itself." The conflict is the hazard: hydro-meteorological, geologic or human-induced hazards. Like in a military operation, the consequences of the "conflict" can be reduced by managing and preparing for the "conflict." The end-goal is achieving the symbolic "zero-casualty."⁴³

With regard to hazards that cannot be predicted such as earthquakes, the Actions, Protocols and Programs of the PDRA will have to be followed by all agencies to synchronise their responses. Responses cannot be purely **actions without protocols**. Every agency has to follow agreed procedures and protocols. But the **protocols must be based on specific program plans** for specific hazards and calamities. These plans "conform to the playbook that was prepared for different scenarios."⁴⁴ To illustrate this, two massive earthquake drills in Metro Manila have already been undertaken in July 2015 and in June 2016 to educate the public and humanitarian responders on the Actions, Protocols and Programs. The Metro Manila Shake Drill is a metro-wide multi-stakeholder earthquake drill that aims to promote a culture of preparedness among Metro Manila residents for a possible 7.2 magnitude earthquake, a catastrophic event that would likely require an international humanitarian response (Rappler, 2016).⁴⁵ Hence, the UN Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) was also invited for the first time to participate to be more familiar with the country's earthquake contingency plan (OCHA, 2016).

The AFP is also now concentrating on the PDRA. It is a practice that the military is now employing because its target is to reduce the loss of lives through the pre-disaster preparations. The AFP hopes that the SRR cluster now, with the practice of PDRA, can have lesser commitments during the post-disaster stage or when the disaster strikes and military resources would be preserved.⁴⁶

Even some NGOs also subscribe to the concept of pre-disaster risk assessment but, unlike the government, they have been doing this assessment even before Super Typhoon Haiyan. One of these NGOs is Christian Aid UK in the Philippines, an international faith-based group

⁴³ Interview with Alexander Pama, former Executive Director of NDRMMC and former Director of the Office of Civil Defence, Department of National Defence, Taguig City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 20 July 2016.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Metro Manila is an earthquake-prone region and the most populous region of the Philippines.

⁴⁶ Interview with Restituto Padilla, Jr., Brigadier General and Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Civil Military Operations, J7 AFP, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 20 July 2016.

which partners with local NGOs. With the assistance of its local NGO partners, Christian Aid UK has been doing pre-disaster assessment of possible risks before hazards strike since Typhoon Dorian that hit the Philippines in 2006. It then issues a pre-emptive alert note. Its assessment measures the possible impact of a hazard and identifies which towns and villages would be affected. Christian Aid UK can approximate how many households would be affected, how many livelihoods would be disrupted so that they can immediately get and deploy relief resources. It believes that disaster relief needs to be science-based and systematic and this can only be realised with appropriate pre-disaster risk assessment. During Super Typhoon Haiyan, it did exactly the same. It took all the assessments, worked with scientific institutions like the Manila Observatory, studying the possible affected areas by Super Typhoon Haiyan, so immediately when it did hit those communities, they readily mobilised themselves to go into different places and be there immediately after the disaster.⁴⁷ In conducting their risks and needs assessment missions, most of the humanitarian organisations including NGOs and FBOs adhere to humanitarian principles and the Sphere Standards.⁴⁸ However, as observed in the aftermath of Super Typhoon Haiyan, there was a mushrooming of “fly-by-night” NGOs which did not observe these international standards. It led to several potential beneficiaries being deprived of relief goods as some of these humanitarian organisations failed to deliver what they promised to their assigned villages.⁴⁹

Increasing role of scientists in HADR

As the pre-disaster risk assessment is essentially a scientific tool that is now being used by the government and NGOs, the role of scientists in strengthening HADR has indeed become critical, particularly in the areas of **prevention and mitigation** as well as **preparation**. Apart from scientific and technical government agencies such as DOST, PAGASA and the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology, scientists from academic and research institutions actively collaborate with the military and government. They are involved in “pre-disaster science”, which entails scientific research on prevention and mitigation that hopefully will help minimise the need for relief. Among the few foremost scientific institutions which are involved in pre-disaster science is the Manila Observatory.

The Manila Observatory’s first involvement in civil-military actions was in 2006 in the aftermath of the Ginsaugon, Southern Leyte landslide.⁵⁰ The government had reached out to the Manila Observatory to help them understand what happened. The team of scientists from the Manila Observatory and the University of the Philippines supported the AFP’s

⁴⁷ Interview with Jessica Dator Dercilla, Regional Advocay Head of Christian Aid UK in the Philippines, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 22 July 2016.

⁴⁸ The Sphere Project and Handbook are based two core beliefs: first, that those affected by disaster or conflict have a right to life with dignity and, therefore, a right to assistance; and second, that all possible steps should be taken to alleviate human suffering arising out of disaster or conflict. For more details, visit <http://www.spherehandbook.org/en/what-is-sphere/>.

⁴⁹ Interview with an officer of Emergency Operations Centre, Philippine Red Cross, Mandaluyong City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 19 July 2016.

⁵⁰ The deadly landslide, which killed 1,100 people, followed a 10-day period of heavy rain.

search and rescue mission through its scientific and technical advice to determine where the rescue should take place. That was first real coordination among the scientists, humanitarian responders and the military. Over time, the Observatory developed robust relationship with the AFP as well as with the NDRRMC.⁵¹

In September 2013, prior to Super Typhoon Haiyan, the NDRRMC executive director requested the Manila Observatory to conduct an executive training course on pre-disaster risk assessment for the NDRRMC and its regional directors. When Super Typhoon Haiyan hit the country, the Manila Observatory had already designed for AFP another pre-disaster and climate change risk training course so that the military from different units all over the country could begin to carry out their own pre-disaster risk assessments. However, the training course for the AFP had to be tweaked to include lessons from this disaster. The course included pre-disaster risk assessment training using climate change adaptation and geo-hazard mapping. It also focused on international best practices in civil-military coordination, tapping the expertise of National Defence University in Washington, D.C. to use emerging HADR technology as well as looking into the military doctrine on civil-military relations.⁵²

In the post-Haiyan period, what the Manila Observatory was able to provide to institutions like the AFP was a capability for observation whether using satellite information or aerial imaging. In the aftermath of Super Typhoon Haiyan, the Manila Observatory played a small role for example in flying drones with cameras over devastation sites together with foreign militaries. It also provided technical support to the information systems that were used in logistics coordination and situational awareness for the MNCC in Cebu. It deployed a technician who established the logistics coordination system among the 14 foreign militaries in order for the flow of the delivery of the relief to be as efficient as possible in spite of the limitations the Tacloban Airport's runway.⁵³

One area where the scientists can further their role in HADR is helping the government in addressing the vulnerabilities of disaster-prone communities. There is a lack of social protection for disaster-prone communities which make them constant victims of disasters every time a typhoon hits their communities. Scientists can help the government identify the types of social protection that certain communities need, based on their environmental and geophysical settings. Another potential area of intervention is building disaster-resilient infrastructure, such as evacuation centres, mass housing projects, hospitals, airports, roads and bridges, during the rehabilitation phase. Scientists can contribute the appropriate technological tools that can be applied to make critical infrastructure withstand disasters.

Scientists can also help to map small islands which might be ignored by big humanitarian organisations and national agencies. For instance, during Haiyan humanitarian response, Christian Aid UK was already able to map out all the affected areas based on the information provided by its local partners. It already knew the small islands which were affected whereas the foreign military contingents and even UN OCHA did not know the

⁵¹ Interview with Antonia Yulo Loyzaga, Executive Director of the Manila Observatory, Manila, Philippines, 23 July 2016.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

location of those isolated small islands. Christian AID UK informed them about the 'missing' islands in their operating map in the hope that they would prioritise those islands and they did so.⁵⁴ Scientists can assist such NGO activities so that all vulnerable and far-flung areas will be more likely to be included in maps.

Has risk communication been changed after Super Typhoon Haiyan?

There have been extensive efforts in the local media in the Philippines to simplify the explanation of pre-disaster science for people to know what needs to be done in preparation for a particular hazard.⁵⁵ Meanwhile, social media accounts of government agencies involved in forecasting and disaster prevention and mitigation have been activated or improved to make real-time and interactive updates and advisories about geologic and weather disturbances available for Filipinos to give affected residents and local governments ample time to prepare.⁵⁶ While the right information and preparatory advice can be given to communities, however, there is still a need to understand if they have the capacity to heed advisories and be prepared accordingly. It would then be the basis if there is a need for relief assistance in the first place. For instance, there have been no nationwide efforts to create evacuation routes and construct disaster-resilient evacuation centres. From the perspective of the scientific community, there have been no efforts by the government to institutionalise basic knowledge on disaster risk mitigation and preparation at least in education curricula.⁵⁷

Localisation of HADR

Central to the critical need to empower communities and make them disaster resilient is strengthening the local governments' disaster risk reduction and preparation management. LGUs are expected to play a critical role in disaster response, particularly in preparedness as specified in the NDRP but capabilities at the local level and coordination between local governments and national government agencies still face a big challenge. The gap between institutional responsibilities and capacities at the local level has been identified as a major impediment to effective disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM) implementation. For instance, according to the Philippine Commission of Audit's latest assessment report on DRRM implementation at the local level, only 23 per cent of LGUs located in flood-prone areas are prepared for disasters in terms of awareness, institutional capacities and coordination. Moreover, mayors who serve as incident commanders may not have the necessary skills on disaster or emergency operations and the functionality of Disaster

⁵⁴ Interview with with Jessica Dator Dercilla, Regional Advocacy Head of Christian Aid UK in the Philippines, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 22 July 2016.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ For more details, please see <http://www.gov.ph/laginghanda/government-information-during-natural-disasters/>

⁵⁷ Interview with Antonia Yulo Lozaga, Executive Director of the Manila Observatory, Manila, Philippines, 23 July 2016.

Emergency Centers was not determined. LGUs which were found to have a 52 per cent level of disaster preparedness still lacked mechanisms on communication and warning, search and rescue, evacuation, relief operations, transportation and medical health services (Commission on Audit, 2014).

In light of the audit findings on selected regional and local governments hardest hit by Haiyan, there is a significant imbalance between the risk exposure of poor, disaster vulnerable LGUs and their available resources to prevent and cope with the impact of disasters. LGUs in poorer and island provinces for example, are at a disadvantage as they have lower revenues and thus, less available resources for their calamity fund. As for prevention and mitigation, foresight and pro-activeness are still not present in many DRRM plans of local governments (Ibid.).

As asserted by the former head of the OCD, the issue of LGUs not having emergency transportation, relief items and evacuation plans is indicative of their non-performance especially the municipalities that are always hit by disasters but still heavily rely on the national government. One evident change after Super Typhoon Haiyan is that local governments have become more conscious of achieving “zero-casualty”. And with this end-goal, it would be much more evident which LGUs come unprepared if they suffer large number of casualties despite warnings and weather advisories.⁵⁸ However, the audit results show that DRRM programs remain highly reactive, done intermittently or only when there are disasters (Commission on Audit, 2014). As one AFP general asserted, LGUs seem to have forgotten the lessons from Super Typhoon Haiyan as they are not adequately investing in DRRM.⁵⁹ No less than the Vice President, Leni Robredo recently said that LGUs must go beyond the "reactive" disaster preparedness efforts, which includes merely securing stocks of relief goods and equipment as part of preparations for calamities. While LGUs have come up with DRRM plans, she observed, these were just cut-and-paste-of-template plans without the inclusion of the specific vulnerabilities of their jurisdictions (Dioquino 2016).

Several humanitarian NGOs in the Philippines have already been conducting locally-led humanitarian response, giving space for communities to be the lead actors in humanitarian response.⁶⁰ For instance, the Philippine Red Cross (PRC) was among the first responders which got access to Haiyan-devastated communities primarily because of the presence of its local chapters in nine provinces affected by Super Typhoon Haiyan namely Western Samar, Eastern Samar, Leyte (which is divided into three chapters: Ormoc, Tacloban, and Hilongos), Cebu, Iloilo, Antique, Capiz, Aklan and Palawan. The presence of local PRC chapters also means that it has the advantage of being familiar with the local context: cultures, norms, practices, relationship with the local stakeholders including the local governments. Hence, PRC local responders were able to get to know better about the situation of the affected communities because of their relationship with local residents that was established a long time ago. The localisation of the HADR allows the PRC to reach the remote communities

⁵⁸ Interview with Alexander Pama, former Executive Director of NDRMMC and former Director of the Office of Civil Defence, Department of National Defence, Taguig City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 20 July 2016.

⁵⁹ Interview with a high-ranking officer of AFP, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 22 August 2016.

⁶⁰ Interview with Jessica Dator Dercilla, Regional Advocacy Head of Christian Aid UK in the Philippines, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 22 July 2016.

primarily through promoting volunteerism. The PRC not only works with local volunteers but also advances the proactive participation and empowerment of its beneficiaries. Through the HADR projects of its local chapters, the PRC empowers beneficiaries to own their disaster preparedness and mitigation as well as recovery projects for sustainability purposes. As claimed by its officers, the localisation of PRC's HADR initiatives promotes community resilience and sustainability because there is always an acceptance and empowerment with the local community.⁶¹

Local governments should therefore emulate the locally-led preparedness and pre-disaster risk assessment of humanitarian organisations. It is imperative that local humanitarian capacities are built in the context of the Philippines, which is both a disaster-prone country and an archipelago. In more centralised humanitarian action, responders would not easily get access to most affected areas due to challenging physical geography as well as lack of efficient and disaster-resilient transport system. While national government is still needed in large-scale-disasters, the massive and systematic preparations, including pre-disaster risk assessment that local governments can put up will make their constituents more aware of the risks involved and with timely evacuations, potential casualties will be avoided, as exemplified in the aftermath of Typhoon Hagupit.

Conclusion and Recommendations: The Future of HADR Landscape and Civil-Military Relations

This NTS Report documents the lessons learned by major stakeholders in HADR in the Philippines from Super Typhoon Haiyan. One important lesson learned is the importance of enhancing coordination among HADR stakeholders. Proper coordination and collaboration among the HADR stakeholders before, during and after the disaster is the key in achieving unity of effort, thereby ensuring a more effective and systematic HADR operations. The adoption of NDRP has provided the structural framework that the government needed to strengthen the synergy and coordination among all those agencies involved in HADR including the AFP and enhance the participation of other stakeholders such as humanitarian NGOs, civil society groups, and the private sector.

Crucial improvements in disaster response and preparedness occurred through synchronizing existing capabilities of different agencies to create new surge capacities. Through the NDRP, loosely coupled government agencies were transformed into an integrated network of HADR clusters. The internalisation of the cluster system in the Philippines is a good example of a localized global norm. With the cluster system, it is now clear which particular government body can be called upon to do specific tasks. In order to have seamless coordination system, changes were made in the cluster system to make NDRP more responsive to the needs of the responding government agencies including the military in their post-Haiyan HADR operations. Crucial to the improvement of coordination after Super Typhoon Haiyan is effective civil-military coordination.

⁶¹ Interview with Brian Kae Enriquez and an officer of the Emergency Operations Centre, Philippine Red Cross, Mandaluyong City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 19 July 2016.

The AFP has created two important coordinating bodies that made disaster response more organised: the MNCC and the CMCC. The existence of the two eliminated the time lag that compromised coordination in Super Typhoon Haiyan. After Super Typhoon Haiyan, there was a paradigm shift in HADR from focusing solely on disaster response towards disaster mitigation and preparedness. The institutionalisation of the PDRA helped stakeholders, particularly the government, predict potential hazard impacts on the population. Its risk assessments provide guidance on the appropriate level of response actions from the national down to the local level. The continuous assessment and analysis of the PDRA allows for all stakeholders to know what to expect particularly in the worst case scenario. The PDRA is indeed designed to strengthen disaster preparedness and mitigation. Disaster preparedness and mitigation are viewed crucial in reducing potential casualties and in minimising the need for response in the aftermath of a disaster. One case study that illustrates the positive impact of PDRA is the preparedness in advance of Typhoon Hagupit in 2014 which is briefly discussed in this report. The PDRA has changed the HADR approach of the government from being reactive to be more prepared and proactive. Crucial to this is the role of local governments which are expected to engineer their respective disaster risk and reduction management plans. However, most local government units remain unprepared for such an eventuality. While significant improvements have been made in HADR based on the lessons learned from Super Typhoon Haiyan, this report offers recommendations to address the gaps identified.

Greater institutionalisation of civilian control over the military can be achieved by strengthening the capacities of local governments to conduct HADR, including pre-disaster risk assessment and preparedness measures.

The continuation of civilian governance before, during and after a disaster is a clear indication of civilian control over the military even in times of crisis. The challenge lies with the over reliance of local governments on the military in the aftermath of a disaster which indicates their unpreparedness.⁶² As one AFP official said, whenever there is a crisis situation, it is always very tempting for some local officials to invite the military to be the head of the HADR operations given that it has the logistical assets and trained personnel. However, the military does not abide by that. The overall commander of HADR operations in a disaster zone should always be a civilian and not the military.⁶³ This is to ensure the continuity of civilian-led governance as HADR remains a function of such a structure.

The Philippine military sees itself as a primary responder to disasters. As mentioned above, it is the lead agency for the SRR cluster and provides logistical assistance to civilian government agencies and responding NGOs. The military, notwithstanding the limitation of its capability, has the strategic lift with its C130s, utility helicopters, army trucks, and navy ships which are very important in transporting relief goods. It has even included HADR as

⁶² Interview with a high-ranking officer of AFP, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 22 July 2016.

⁶³ Interview with Francis Alaurin, Colonel and Head of Strategic Studies Division, Office of Strategic Studies and Strategy Management, AFP, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 20 July 2016.

one of its four critical mission areas.⁶⁴ Moreover, it has also established coordinating centres to facilitate the entry of local and international HADR actors, and to synergise their activities.

HADR, however, is part of civilian governance and local governments are mandated with the responsibility to be the first responder and to have proactive disaster risk reduction and management plans, including facilitating coordination of humanitarian responders. The NDRP acknowledges and supports the principles of the Local Government Code (Republic Act 7160) wherein all LGUs are mandated to prepare and render response for all eventualities of disaster within their boundaries. There is a mind-set among local government officials that as the military is capable and its service is free-of-charge, they can just depend on them. However, the AFP always incurs expenses which are not reimbursed by local authorities whenever military assets are used in HADR operations. For instance, the maintenance of a C130 is more expensive than that of a regular civilian cargo plane.⁶⁵ From the perspective of an AFP General, once the local governments strengthen their capability to deliver and monitor basic services at the local level through disaster response and management plans, they will be able to improve their disaster management expertise. As the same facilities and infrastructure are needed for both local governance and disaster response, if they build their capacity by improving basic services at the local governments, they can make their community more resilient.

While the military observes the civilian authority over the military, the military will have to be insulated from the political pressure coming from the local government officials who quarrel over the deployment of logistical assets and relief items. This can be achieved only if the LGUs and other civilian agencies strengthen their respective DRRM plans, conduct pre-disaster risk assessment (PDRA), and always direct their concerns to the OCD and the NDRRMC-- civilian agencies which can provide instructions to the military, insulating the soldiers from politicking at the local level.

The capacities of communities to reduce their own risks should be enhanced through localisation of HADR.

As exemplified by the activities of the PRC and Christian Aid UK, decentralisation of HADR can result in faster response and easier access to affected communities. If emulated by other national and international humanitarian organisations, together with the proactive preparedness measures of LGUs proposed above, communities will be empowered to address their own vulnerabilities, thereby reducing their over reliance on post-disaster relief.

Given that the Philippines is a disaster-prone and an archipelagic country, it is imperative that local humanitarian capacities are built based on in this context. For them it is crucial that local humanitarian capacities are built in the context of the Philippines, which is both a disaster-prone country and an archipelago. In a more centralised humanitarian action,

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Interview with a high-ranking officer of the AFP, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 22 July 2016.

responders would not easily get access to most affected areas due to challenging physical geography as well as lack of efficient and disaster-resilient transport system. National and international NGOs, with the assistance of relevant government agencies such as the Department of Social Welfare and Development, should capacitate local and community-based organisations down to the village level to lead not just 'reactive' disaster response but also prevention and mitigation initiatives to reduce the vulnerabilities of their respective communities. One important capacity building initiative that can be provided to local NGOs and communities is pre-disaster risk assessment training. While it is still expected that the national government performs the main coordinating role through the NDRRMC, the massive and systematic preparations, including pre-disaster risk assessment that local governments can deliver will make their local communities more aware of the risks involved, and, with timely evacuations, will greatly reduce potential casualties.

The HADR activities of all stakeholders can be further improved by using one platform or system that is based on the PDRA.

After Super Typhoon Haiyan, there were several overlapping HADR activities identified as a result of inadequate coordination. In some areas, for instance, there were fishermen who received two or three boats each during the post-Haiyan rehabilitation phase. It will be more effective and efficient if there is greater synergy between stakeholders with the government providing the platform through which humanitarian organisations can coordinate. Furthermore, the government should be in a position to supplement their efforts where needed rather than heavily rely on external assistance. The government needs to be more involved not just in response but more importantly in disaster preparedness and risk reduction. This niche can be based on the needs that will be identified in a pre-disaster risk assessment. Once the stakeholders identify their niches, they can focus on their respective responsibilities to avoid gaps and service overlaps. In this regard, non-governmental stakeholders such as the private sector and humanitarian NGOs are encouraged to synchronise and coordinate with the government.

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