



Australian Government
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade



Knowledge Sharing on Global Good Practice on Community-Driven Approach to Housing Reconstruction¹

Paradigm Shift in Post-Yolanda Housing Reconstruction

The magnitude of the needed reconstruction – in infrastructure and housing, among many – following the devastation brought about by Typhoon Yolanda (international name, Haiyan) demands an approach that will hasten the rebuilding of homes, and of people’s lives and communities. The extent of the damage has been assessed and the needs, identified.² Nearly a year after Typhoon Yolanda struck, the government and its international and local partners are poised to “build back better, faster, and safer” in an unprecedented scale. As also declared in his opening remarks by Secretary Panfilo M. Lacson, Presidential Assistant for Rehabilitation and Recovery, the objective is “not only to restore the pre-Haiyan economic demographics but to surpass the quality of life associated with the pre-Haiyan status quo. . . . I also recognize that improving the economic and sociopolitical conditions of Haiyan-affected communities is key to reducing vulnerability to disaster risks.”

In her welcome remarks, the World Bank’s acting country director, Ms. Chiyo Kanda, framed the knowledge-sharing discussions by indicating that the “challenge of reaching scale” could be met by learning from the experiences of other countries as well as local projects, and moving away from “business as usual.” In particular, the major decision making and work on the rebuilding of homes should be placed in the hands of their owners and their communities, with the government providing the “platform” for this type of support and making available the needed resources and technical and other assistance. “Once this paradigm shift is realized, the success of scale is in our hand. I hope the paradigm shift starts today.”

While the focus of the government’s housing reconstruction efforts has been the 205,128 units needed to be built in safe and sustainable resettlement sites, the participants cautioned that attention should not also be taken away from the rest of the nearly 1 million affected households. These households and their communities would likewise benefit from a community-driven

¹The one-day session was held on 5 September 2014 at The World Bank Manila Office, One Global Place, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig City, and facilitated by Maria Anna de Rosas Ignacio, who also put together and provided the contexts of this summary of the proceedings (see Annex A for the program and Annex B for the list of participants.)

²In December 2013, the National Economic and Development Authority published the document, *Reconstruction Assistance on Yolanda*, which details a preliminary assessment of the damage in affected areas, the economic and social impact, and initial plan for recovery and reconstruction. In July 2014, the Office of the Presidential Assistant for Rehabilitation and Recovery, which was created in December 2013, put out a consolidated summary of further post-disaster assessment as well as the status of the work being done and the plans and expected deliverables for the months ahead. OPARR submitted to the President the final *Yolanda Comprehensive Rehabilitation and Recovery Plan* (CRRP) in August 2014.

approach which should be adopted in the housing and other reconstruction efforts. At the same time, any post-Yolanda work should incorporate knowledge management, codification, and institutionalization of policies and processes as many other “Yolandas” would likely come this way. The country’s post-disaster efforts should veer away from ad hoc arrangements and fuse the loop between immediate disaster response and recovery.

Community-Driven Approach

Indonesia’s “REKOMPAK” (community-based approach for rebuilding houses and community infrastructure in Aceh, Yogyakarta, and West and Central Java) and Pakistan’s ERRA (Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority) provide inspiring models and benchmarks for the reconstruction of homes following massive natural disasters. Both experiences involved a community-driven approach in undertaking the rebuilding of homes—over 600,000 housing units in the case of the Pakistan earthquake of 2005; and a total of more than 300,000 units in Indonesia’s Aceh and North Sumatra tsunami of 2004, Yogyakarta and Central Java earthquake and West Java tsunami of 2005, the West Sumatra earthquake of 2009, and the Merapi Volcano eruption of 2010. In Pakistan as well as in Indonesia, households were given cash grants (about US\$3,000), which were considered as incentives and assistance for core shelter construction. The grants were released after extensive social preparation and technical training on housing construction carried out by government agencies and their civil society partners. In both cases, the reconstruction of an annual average of more than 100,000 housing units was achieved, with the bulk completed in the initial years of the program. The household-beneficiaries have already begun to incrementally improve their homes so that these could match their situations and needs.

Community-driven development

is an approach that gives control over planning decisions and investment resources for local development projects to community groups. CDD programs operate on the principles of local empowerment, participatory governance, demand-responsiveness, administrative autonomy, greater downward accountability, and enhanced local capacity.

www.worldbank.org/topic/communitydrivendevelopment

As highlighted in the presentation by Mr. Ekita Arsita Rizki of REKOMPAK, through the words of a community beneficiary, by employing a community-driven approach “. . . people become aware and capable. We can maintain the quality of our homes. If construction is done by a third-party (contractor), we only can accept it as it is, and do not have authority to determine” (see Annex D).³ A delegation from Philippine national agencies involved in post-Yolanda reconstruction traveled to Indonesia in early 2014 for an onsite understanding of the REKOMPAK experience and affirmed the value of a community-driven approach. In answering the question whether or not there could be a “window for community-based shelter construction in the implementation of the Yolanda Comprehensive Rehabilitation and Recovery Plan,”

³The Indonesian experience is a well-documented case; see, among many, “REKOMPAK: Rebuilding Indonesia’s Communities After Disasters, 2012, published by the Secretariat of the Multi Donor Fund for Aceh and Nias and the Java Reconstruction Fund.

Undersecretary Lesley Cordero of OPARR, who was a member of the delegation, enumerated the government's commitment under the CRRP, which paralleled the scale of the work done in Indonesia (see Annex F). She also cited KALAH! CIDSS-NCDDP (Kapit-Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan-Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services-National Community-Driven Development Program) of the Department of Social Welfare and Development and CMP (Community Mortgage Program) of the Social Housing Finance Corporation as examples of local experiences in community-driven development, and could likewise serve as models for the field implementation of a realistic and grounded CRRP.

Lt. Gen. Nadeem Ahmed of ERRA (via teleconferencing) said that with the scale of his country's post-earthquake problem "conventional approach would not help, strategic errors cannot be undone by tactical brilliance" (see Annex F). As narrated by Lt. Gen. Nadeem, the ERRA experience reiterated that through a community-driven approach the targeted scale and speed of the housing reconstruction had not only been achieved but had produced many other value added, including reduced costs, enhancement of social capital, improvement in the beneficiaries' technical skills, and sustainability and continued improvement of the services provided. The approach also allowed a more focused and inclusive targeting, particularly with regard to more vulnerable households and individuals.

Local Community-Driven Initiatives

Three national government agencies – SHFC, DSWD, and NHA – shared their work that had already been started in some areas affected by Typhoon Yolanda (see Annex G, Annex H, and Annex I). The initiatives were part of regular programs and undertakings of these agencies, which were modified to incorporate special needs and situations related to Yolanda-affected households. A common component of these programs has been community or beneficiary participation, which may need to be fine-tuned to become more embracing of a community-driven approach in the post-Yolanda housing reconstruction.

In the case of SHFC, its CMP, a housing finance program, supports community-managed housing projects for both voluntary relocation and onsite development in safe areas. While the program recognizes partnerships for community support in the area of community organizing, settlement planning and management, construction, and financial management, its incentives are limited only to the organizing work. In its post-Yolanda CMP work, SHFC has likewise partnered with international and local donor organizations for the house construction and repair works in order to make the loan affordable as it is able to extend financial assistance only for the land acquisition and site development. SHFC will seek a policy directive from its Board of Directors so that it could incorporate a grant component for technical assistance, which would facilitate the project development and management work of the communities. Additional grants may likewise be considered for house repairs and construction.

For its part, DSWD already has its regular shelter assistance for disaster-affected families. Involving three types, depending on the situation of the beneficiary-family, the shelter assistance is designed as a financial grant that can cover partial or core housing construction in resettlement sites or in original locations if these are determined to be compliant with safety

requirements. DSWD works with organized neighborhood associations and LGUs in the implementation of this program, including in the release of funds to beneficiaries and the procurement of materials.

NHA, the key shelter agency tasked with housing production, works with Local Interagency Committees (LIAC) and the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) in its work toward the provision of permanent shelter, as well as community facilities, for disaster-affected families. It makes available various design options for disaster-resilient homes, with corresponding cost estimates. While it has worked with such NGOs as Gawad Kalinga and Habitat for Humanity, NHA has yet to fully operationalize a community-driven approach and make it a routine part of its work mode. It cites the limited availability of public or LGU-owned lands and delays in the processing of documentary requisites (e.g., clearance from the Mines and Geosciences Bureau and topographic survey map) as among the key challenges in fast-tracking the implementation of its resettlement program for disaster-affected families. More important, NHA is also constrained by the absence of a definitive or clear legal framework with regard to the downloading of government funds to nongovernment and people's organizations.

A presentation by the Environmental Science for Social Change, a Jesuit research institute, of the key results of its study on post-disaster housing approaches support many of the major challenges cited by SHFC, DSWD, and NHA. ESSC's study was carried out in selected project sites of the three agencies. The sites, which were affected by devastating typhoons prior to Typhoon Yolanda, were assessed in terms of disaster resilience, community participation, timeliness, affordability, and sustainability (see Annex J). On the basis of its findings, ESSC called for a national strategy on post-disaster housing reconstruction to be established soonest. It recommended the integration of resilience measures in site selection, site development, housing designs, materials and standards, and post-occupation estate management. It also highlighted the need for more substantive engagement of the beneficiary community in NHA's resettlement program and for all housing agencies and DSWD to increase their technical monitoring capability and, together with LGUs, "offer engagement opportunities beyond funding and technical support" to communities as well as to improve coordination at the community and LGU levels.

Arena for Further Action

Engaging the active participation of communities and civil society organizations in nation building is enshrined in Philippine laws and a centerpiece of the present Administration (as stated in the Constitution, the President's "Social Contract with the Filipino People," and the *Philippine Development Plan, 2011-2016*, among others). Nonetheless, an unequivocal policy statement, coming from the highest level, on the adoption of a community-driven approach in post-Yolanda housing reconstruction – in addressing not only the resettlement of communities to safe areas but also the rebuilding of homes in locations which

An unequivocal policy statement, from the highest level, regarding the adoption of a community-driven approach in post-Yolanda housing reconstruction is essential toward hastening the process of consensus building while the operational mechanics and details are being crafted at various levels.

are not hazard-prone – is essential toward hastening the process of consensus building while the operational mechanics and details are being formulated and put in place. This should come with an emphatic stance, and reiteration at various levels of the implementation structure, that the government’s provision of housing in disaster-affected areas is not an expense but an investment that could also serve as a further economic growth driver. Subsequently, a firm declaration concerning the use of a community-driven approach should bring about directed efforts toward harmonizing policies, or even modifying some agency rules and procedures, so that the government could truly become an enabler and not simply a regulator in the development process.

In her closing remarks, Ms. Celia Alba, Secretary General of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council, emphasized that NHA and HUDCC are committed to employing a community-driven approach in addressing the mandate of providing over 200,000 shelters as indicated in the CRRP. She echoed the information shared by OPARR that the community-driven approach had been discussed with a number of agency principals as well as at the cabinet level. She indicated that the concept was well received and generally accepted as the approach to be used for moving forward but the challenge would be its operationalization. She admitted that the mechanisms and details that this approach entailed had yet to be defined and more discussions between and among HUDCC, NHA, OPARR and other agencies in the resettlement cluster were needed. Nonetheless, there had already been initial discussions about the identification of a pilot site that would use a community-driven approach.

Among the key national-level operational and implementation issues with regard to the adoption of a community-driven approach are institutional arrangements for policy setting and implementation oversight, funds flow arrangements, and government support mechanisms. At the community level, the key a priori issues focus on community mobilization, quality assurance, and accountability.⁴

Institutional Arrangements

OPARR is mandated to provide the planning, coordinating, and oversight functions in addressing post-Yolanda rehabilitation and recovery requirements. It has established five cabinet-level clusters for specific needs and, at the local level, works with local government units, civil society organizations, private sector groups, and other development partners and stakeholders. These groups have all been involved in a “bottom-up” approach in crafting the CRRP. As the reconstruction efforts move toward local and community-level work, the various layers of the inter-agency coordinating committees (from the national

Designating a national-level institutional home, vested with appropriate powers, as well as identifying layers of structures from the regional to community levels is a key initial task in adopting a community-driven approach.

⁴The publication, *Safer Homes, Stronger Communities: A Handbook for Reconstructing after Natural Disaster*, 2010, Abhas K. Jha and others, Washington, DC: The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank, will be a useful guide in the preparation of manuals and related materials.

or NIAC, to the local, that is, provincial or city and municipal LIAC) may need to be tapped and involved more actively. More important, designating an institutional home for orchestrating a community-driven approach in housing reconstruction, along with vesting this institution with the needed authority, is a fundamental and immediate decision making point.

The LIAC at the city or municipality level is a structure that NHA has engaged in many of its projects and, in most cases, the arrangement has worked well. In the case of the current need for massive housing reconstruction, a review of the functions (including decision-making parameters) and subsequent expansion of the LIAC may be necessary so that its responsibilities and composition could become more appropriate for a community-driven approach. Moreover, while the replication of roles and functions at every level has to be achieved, the formation of community-level structures needs to take into consideration the uniqueness of various conditions and settings. Enough flexibility has to be installed in keeping with the principles of a community-driven approach.

Community Mobilization: Finding Local Partners

A major requisite of the community-driven approach is the presence of community organizers or facilitators who would help ensure the preparedness of beneficiary-households and communities for the implementation process. In ongoing NHA post-disaster reconstruction projects, DSWD serves the social preparation needs. Its KALAHI CIDSS-NCDDP experience provides an existing local model that can be utilized. The magnitude, however, of the shelter reconstruction yet to be carried out demands expanded arrangements for community mobilization, which may be beyond DSWD's existing capacity.

The identification of NGOs, POs, PO and NGO networks, and other civil society groups that would address the need for community mobilization is thus an urgent task. At the same time, there should likewise be a search for local partners from the private sector (including land and housing developers or contractors, architects, and engineers) that can provide technical assistance in the settlement planning and construction management phase. A directory of these groups has to be generated at the community level so that the identification of groups working on the ground could be facilitated. Moreover, a system of vetting and accreditation of organizations, with inputs from civil society and private sector groups and LGUs, has to be put in place.

DSWD's KALAHI CIDSS-NCDDP experience can provide the core of the community mobilization resource. This should be twinned and complemented with an immediate on-the-ground listing of potential community mobilization partners and workers.

Training modules for trainors and for those who will be involved directly in community organizing and facilitation will also have to be prepared so that consistency in message and action could be achieved. And, certainly, the training of at least the trainors needs to be carried out in earnest as soon as possible. As pointed out above, DSWD's KALAHI CIDSS-NCDDP could provide the core of this training and community facilitation needs.

Land Acquisition

Another urgent task is the identification of land for resettlement sites, an assignment that has generally been given to LGUs. While land acquisition in itself is a major undertaking, this has to be carried out with consideration not only for disaster resilience but livelihood opportunities and basic services availability as well. OPARR has made it a requirement that certifications from MGB and DOST (Department of Science and Technology) be secured prior to land acquisition to ensure that the property being purchased is in a safe area. MGB geohazard maps (1:5,000) and DOST maps should be made readily accessible to facilitate the identification of safe areas as well as mitigating measures for areas with some risks.

Policy decision on land tenure arrangements is also an area of concern. In both Indonesia and Pakistan, for instance, one modality was allowing households to identify the land that they could purchase and assisting the households in the negotiation and other legal processes, through a one-stop operation. The SHFC experience in Tacloban City entailed an off-site CMP assistance involving a piece of land offered voluntarily by its owners.

Significant finds may be produced in a systematic land identification process carried out from the barangay to the provincial level, and involving the local implementation structures and even the beneficiary-communities themselves. Private sector groups, such as banks and private land owners, could be gathered in a forum to hasten land identification. Moreover, bank-foreclosed properties and those in real estate tax delinquency lists could become sources of much-needed resettlement sites.

In some areas, the Department of Agrarian Reform may need to be involved in the local implementation structure to facilitate, when needed, the conversion of identified land from agricultural to residential use. LGUs would also need to complete their land use plans and actively engage the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Registry of Deeds so land registration or titling concerns could be addressed promptly.

Funds Flow Arrangement: The “Fear Factor”

A major constraint in engaging NGOs and other civil society groups in government programs and projects is the absence of a clear policy on the transfer of funds. While some agencies are currently able to effect fund transfers (such as SHFC in its CMP and DSWD in its partnership with the Neighborhood Association for Shelter Assistance or NASA), the officials concerned are threatened by what many jokingly refer to as the “fear factor” in government service, that is, receiving adverse post-audit findings (such as expense disallowance and technical malversation charges) by the Commission on Audit and thus jeopardizing tenure or even retirement. On the one hand, the participation of COA in national-level planning and decision making may be required so that clear directives on funds flow could be put in place. SHFC’s accreditation process of CMP mobilizers may serve as a model in coming up with a list of local partners to be involved in fund management. On the other hand, NGOs and other civil society

Policy and procedural inputs and commitments from COA would be needed to facilitate fund flow, utilization, and reporting as well as procurement.

groups need to also be engaged concerning policing their ranks and capability building with regard to fund management and controls as well as financial liquidation and reporting.

Another potential constraint would be the application of the Government Procurement Reform Act, which could limit the pursuit of scale and speed in housing reconstruction. Like the need for clarification on COA rules, a policy pertaining to procurement relevant to a community-driven approach may be necessary.

Accountability and Transparency

The goal of achieving accountability and transparency in all aspects of implementing a program using a community-driven approach subsumes community involvement in the process of beneficiary identification and deciding on grant assistance allocation. It should likewise incorporate mechanisms and structures in which grievance and complaints are to be handled at all levels. Moreover, the grievance mechanism should include a feedback and documentation system, particularly as regards how complaints or issues have been handled. All these may be formulated to dovetail with plans of OPARR for its Electronic Management Platform: Accountability and Transparency Hub for Yolanda or EMPATHY.

Quality Assurance

As indicated in the ESSC presentation, disaster resilience should be viewed from various dimensions, not only in the housing unit construction itself but as early as the site selection phase. There is thus a need for MGB to be involved at the highest level and in technical aspects of decision making. In addition, universities and other local groups can be invited to contribute to design, quality testing, and other technical requirements. As households will be involved in housing construction – as part of their counterpart – technical training has to be carried out. This will improve the pool of trained artisans and other workers at the local levels and at the same time generate additional cash income opportunities for the beneficiaries.

Concern for quality assurance must be coupled with flexibility in interior layout design and exterior style of housing units. This will ensure that homes would be appropriate for their users' needs and conditions and, more important, engender a strong sense of ownership and accomplishment for their owners. The allowance for flexibility should be communicated at the outset and put in motion as housing construction is ongoing – a condition that may be untenable under a contractor-driven development. (Both the Indonesian and Pakistan experiences cited that the incremental housing improvement brought about by the provision of assistance for core shelter construction also addressed government funding constraint without sacrificing structural soundness.)

Some Final Notes

As value chain planning and decision making is made to bear on the adoption of a community-driven approach to housing reconstruction, the existing and tested building blocks must be acknowledged and harnessed. At the same time, the limitations in resources and capabilities of national government agencies, local government units, and civil society groups

must be recognized and addressed. A final policy directive concerning the application of the approach, and the designation of a national implementation structure, will stimulate the corresponding modification or fine-tuning of “sub-systems” at agency levels. All these must be communicated clearly and repeatedly to all in all levels.

Putting in place a well-articulated system for addressing housing reconstruction and demonstrating its evident initial results could attract more assistance for the country’s efforts to rise from the unprecedented devastation brought about by Typhoon Yolanda. The government can leverage what it does well and with good outcomes with increased local and international support. And in the years ahead, the current experience should be able to count many other benefits—strengthened multisectoral partnerships, improved policies and systems from disaster response to recovery, and, more important, empowered households and communities able to address their other needs and hopes.

