



Summary Report

Evaluation of Natural Disaster Reconstruction Assistance in the Philippines 2013-14 to 2018-19

Why is it important?

The increasing frequency and severity of natural disasters poses a significant threat to the lives and livelihoods of people living in highly exposed countries like the Philippines. The poorest and most vulnerable are disproportionately affected. Global Affairs Canada's response to Typhoon Haiyan provides a useful example of providing relief, recovery, and reconstruction assistance. The Philippines program also provides an example of how disaster risk can influence the design, implementation and sustainability of international assistance programming.

- **Total international assistance disbursements** 2013-14 to 2018-19: \$163 million. Excluding the Typhoon Haiyan response, average yearly disbursements were approximately \$13 million.
- **Data Collection Methods:**
 - Key stakeholder interviews (138 interviews)
 - Site visits to six projects
 - Focus group sessions (14) and individual interviews (21) with a total of 226 project participants (144 female, 82 male)
 - Project review (19 projects)
 - Project financial analysis
 - Document and literature review
- **Evaluation Completed:** July 2019

What the evaluation assessed:

Global Affairs Canada's international assistance programming in the Philippines between 2013-14 and 2018-19, with a focus on post-typhoon reconstruction projects supported by the bilateral development program, alongside a purposive sample of projects supported through partnership programming (KFM) and regional programming (OGM).

The evaluation questions that were asked:

Relevance

- To what extent was it relevant for Global Affairs Canada to fund post-disaster reconstruction projects in the Philippines, in light of:
 - Government, multilateral (e.g. the Association of Southeast Asian Nations) and donor investments;
 - Typhoon Haiyan's impacts and community needs; and
 - Canada's mandate, priorities and expertise?

Results

- To what extent did reconstruction projects contribute to expected outcomes, especially for women and girls?
- In what ways were reconstruction project activities and results different from other similar development projects?
- For international assistance projects that identified natural disasters or climate change risks in their project design, to what extent were mitigation or adaptation strategies effective and able to support the achievement of results?

Resilience (Sustainability and Efficiency)

- What were the resilience factors that supported the sustainability of results, particularly for women and girls?
- Did the presence of a disaster and climate change mitigation strategy affect project efficiency?



What the evaluation found

Relevance

- The reconstruction program allowed Canada to provide a phased approach in responding to a natural disaster.
- Canada aligned its support with the Philippine Government's plan for economic recovery.
- The reconstruction program complemented Canada's existing economic programming as well as regional training on how to respond to natural disasters.
- Typhoon-affected communities needed to restore their sources of income. Canada responded.
- Reconstruction programming did not address the full extent of needs. There were gaps in the timeliness of response.
- Program activities were consistent with key principles for supporting a middle-income country.

Results

- reduction and gender equality in support of improving livelihoods. Local implementing partners saw this as innovative
- The reconstruction program design was consistent with a number of principles for successful and responsible reconstruction support.
- The reconstruction program increased participants' business skills, resulting in improved operations and products.
- The reconstruction program provided improved access to business services, but to a lesser extent than hoped for.
- The reconstruction program helped typhoon-affected women and men to recover and, for many, to improve their income sources.
- Women pursued new or improved economic activities, leading to financial independence and increased confidence.
- Gender equality training resulted in more husbands supporting their wives' economic participation by sharing in household responsibilities. Local governments became more gender aware.
- There were four key challenges where lessons should be learned for future programming:
 1. partners struggled with participant engagement;
 2. partners were focused on the number of people reached instead of life-changing impacts for individuals;
 3. the reconstruction projects were not connected; and
 4. although partners had the same expected results, they measured financial improvement differently, preventing comparability.
- The reconstruction program implemented good practices for a successful international assistance project.
- Partnering with academia and advocating for action on environmental and disaster issues with local government led to innovation.
- There was a continued need for expanding "disaster-sensitive" programming to support the achievement of results and overall cost-savings.
- At a departmental level, Global Affairs Canada was reducing its degree of strategic environmental and climate change risk analysis for new programming during the period.
- "Disaster Risk Reduction" was considered an orphan file within Global Affairs Canada. Without a lead, guidance was scattered and limited to immediate humanitarian relief.

What the evaluation found

Resilience (Sustainability and Efficiency)

- Participants were confident in the long-term sustainability of their small businesses.
- Persistent threats to the sustainability of results remained.
- Partnerships with the public sector were essential for continuing support to communities vulnerable to typhoons.
- Reconstruction projects primarily supported improving individuals' financial security and planning for future natural disasters, also known as “financial resilience.”
- The Philippines program may have been at risk of diminishing its impact by expanding into new programming while international assistance resources were decreasing.

Summary of Recommendations and Management Responses

Recommendation 1:

Explore options with partners to attempt to address any outstanding sustainability challenges to ensure projects close, and partners leave, responsibly. Review sustainability risks with reconstruction partners when final reports are submitted. Document lessons learned and opportunities to strengthen future sustainability planning and monitoring processes.

Agreed: The Philippines program will have final conversations with partners to discuss outstanding sustainability issues, and andThe Embassy of Canada to the Philippines (MANIL) and Global Affairs Canada's Southeast Asia division (OSD) will convene a team discussion to provide feedback (including on sustainability issues) in comments on the final report. MANIL and OSD will undertake a joint planning exercise to integrate lessons learned into the design of new pipeline initiatives. The program will explore the interest shown by a Canadian university to partner with Eastern Visayas State University's medium and small enterprises support centre in Tacloban to provide additional support in this area. The program will also explore the interest of Canadian companies in furthering the use of corporate social responsibility funds to support economic activities and community projects supported under the reconstruction program.

Recommendation 2:

For new programming, provide incentives to partners to find practical ways to work together and share resources.

Agreed: The Philippines program will work with a project partner on a new women's rights and advocacy project. The program will discuss with the proposed partner, Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP), for the planned Women's Rights, Action and Advocacy Project (WRAAP) specific approaches for bringing project sub-partners (upwards of 60) together for increased efficiency and economies. Partner to produce a collaboration strategy as part of the Project Implementation Plan (PIP) process.

Recommendation 3:

Ensure continuity in programming by demonstrating how the new Feminist International Assistance programming builds on previous disaster risk reduction and sustainable economic growth successes while also aligning with principles for working in a middle-income country.

Agreed: The Philippines program will support knowledge sharing activities. The program will work with the International Assistance Evaluation division (PRA) to implement new knowledge tools – video, factsheet, and knowledge event. Tools will support the design of two new initiatives in the Investment Plan (IP). Where possible, new project activities and Performance Measurement Frameworks (PMF) will reflect resilience and reconstruction best practices.

Summary of Recommendations and Management Responses

Recommendation 4:

Given the high volume of programming in regions considered high-risk and vulnerable to natural disasters, the department should determine its official approach and messaging on supporting disaster risk reduction and what it would mean to have disaster-sensitive international assistance programming in these countries.

Agreed: Global Affairs Canada's Food Security and Environment bureau (MSD) and International Assistance Policy bureau (PVD), in consultation with the International Humanitarian Assistance bureau (MHD), will identify options for establishing disaster risk reduction support. Options may range from the status quo to establishing a robust centre of expertise. Proposed options will be presented to the Director General Programs Committee (DGPC) and to Programs Committee for guidance and advice. A recommended option will be presented to the Executive Committee (ExCo) for its decision.

The Assistant Deputy Ministers (ADM) of Strategic Policy (PFM) and Global Issues and Development (MFM) have agreed to raise the issue with the Associate Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs (DMA) at a Round-up meeting to inform options.

Considerations for Future Programming

Opportunities for Innovation:

1) Canada could lead on developing communication and collaboration guidelines for the international donor community during humanitarian interventions. Guidelines would aim to more meaningfully include the affected state government as well as encourage consecutive programming that provides relief, early recovery, reconstruction, disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation.

2) Global Affairs Canada could define the parameters and guidance for developing an “exit strategy” when moving to gradually reduce international assistance in middle-income countries.

Disaster-sensitive programming

- 1) The Philippines program demonstrated that project officers need to be actively creating disaster-sensitive projects by incorporating good practices in disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation to better support their participants in living with dynamic environmental risks.

Use of experts

- 2) Local environmental experts understood local laws and appropriate strategies while departmental experts ensured high Canadian environmental standards. These experts were often engaged too late in the project design process. Project officers must engage experts early on to support partners in potentially re-designing projects before implementation commences.
- 3) Local universities were valuable partners for the Philippines projects. These institutions provided cutting-edge research and helped to introduce new technologies or other creative local solutions. Universities would have appreciated engagement with Canadian academic institutions. Projects should identify opportunities for local and Canadian academic partnerships.

Coherent programming

- 4) Although the reconstruction projects were designed to be a program, there was limited collaboration between the partners, resulting in duplication of effort. Project officers will need to provide common expected results and also provide incentives to partners to share and collaborate.
- 5) Reconstruction programming complemented regional programming, which aligned well with an increasing appetite for South-South cooperation and for regional organizations to play a more prominent role. Aligning programming in this way can strengthen Canada’s engagement while building capacity in these regional bodies.

Enhanced sustainability

- 6) Although the sustainability of results was planned for at the outset of projects, these plans were not always followed, or were forgotten, during implementation. Projects should engage with the public sector at their inception, and align with government priorities to increase the chances of a successful handover. Regular project monitoring needs to more actively address emerging threats to sustainability.