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# Recovery and return after typhoon Haiyan/Yolanda

## Environmental displacement in the Philippines

**S**uper typhoon Haiyan, locally known as Yolanda, hit the Visaya Islands of the Philippines on November 8, 2013 around 5 a.m. local time producing one of the most severe human tragedies the country has ever seen. Only 3 days after the natural disaster the 19<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of the Parties (COP19) began in Warsaw from 11 to 22 of November. The touching and tearful speech given by the lead climate negotiator of the Philippines Yeb Sano, who is originally from the completely devastated city of Tacloban, earned standing ovations and an applause that lasted several minutes. He also announced that he would start a hunger strike against the passivity and stagnation of the COP in the Figure ht against greenhouse gas emissions and global warming as a consequence of climate change (Young 12.11.2013). The conference provoked strong reactions of compassion and, as described by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, typhoon Haiyan has given a “human face” to climate change (Nunez 22.11.2013) pointing to the millions of people affected by the typhoon.

The occurrence of highly destructive storms has been increasing in the past few decades especially for disaster-prone countries like the US (Katrina 2005, Sandy 2012) or island states like the Philippines, yearly haunted by over 20 tropical storms (Ther 07.11.2013) which regularly cause great devastation (ultimately by Typhoon Bohol 2012). But never has a tropical storm been as devastating as Haiyan/Yolanda, overwhelming local, national and international authorities. According to the United Nations offices the typhoon affected in total 9 regions, 44 provinces and nearly 600 municipalities. The human impact was tremendous: 14.1 million people were affected (almost 15 percent of the total population), over 6,000 died and almost 2,000 were by the time still missing. In total 4.1 million people were displaced by the event and 1.1 million houses were damaged (OCHA & UNEP 14.01.2014). A few days after the disaster 1,552 government-run evacuation centers were hosting approximately 387,450 displaced people (IDMC 2013c).

Following the flood, media all around the world uncovered the devastation and mobilized huge amounts of international aid. The Filipino government together with several UN- and other international aid agencies, but also smaller NGOs actively took part to alleviate the situation of the displaced. Nevertheless Haiyan clearly showed the limited capacity of the international community to handle a disaster of this extent. In this paper we will primarily try to assess the situation of the displaced people and draw their migration since Typhoon Haiyan until now. We will try to focus on the recovery process as a whole and the return of Internally Displaced People (IDPs), as well as the short and long-term challenges. Furthermore, we will examine the policy responses proposed by the Filipino Government and international aid agencies to handle the environmental and human disaster.

## THE PHILIPPINES

The Philippines is an archipelago with a total area of 299,404 km<sup>2</sup> in the north-western Pacific of 7,107 islands, from which around 1,000 are inhabitable. The country has a rich biology, a great diversity and has one of the world's longest coastlines. The Philippines has a population of 97 million people and is considered a lower middle-income country.

At the same time the country is one of the world's most disaster-prone countries, from which typhoons, earthquakes or floods are only few examples. Natural disasters have led to great destruction and a high vulnerability of the majoritarian poor population. The island state is thus especially affected by the consequences of climate change. Most of the Filipino population lives in a situation of high social, environmental and economic vulnerability. Around 26.5 percent of the population is living under the poverty line (DATA World Bank).

The Eastern and Western Visayas were strongly affected by Haiyan and led to a displacement of more than 4.1 million people.

## 1. THE PHILIPPINES – A VULNERABLE ARCHIPELAGO IN THE PACIFIC OCEAN

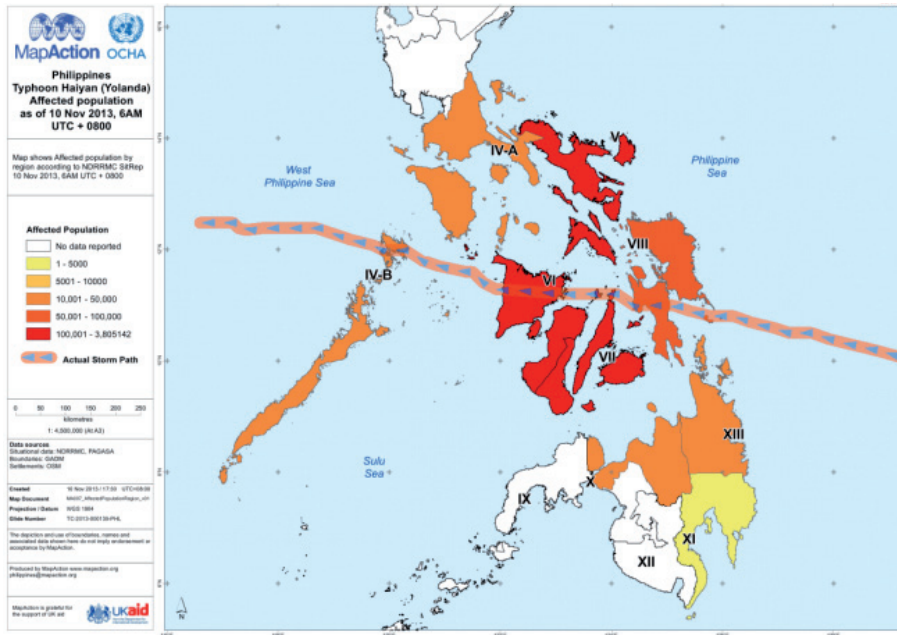
### 1.1. Risk exposure and assessment of vulnerabilities

The Philippines is located in the northwestern Pacific zone and is considered one of the most “at risk” countries of natural disasters. The Visayas, a group of islands in the Philippines, has high rates of poverty with over 50-60 percent in the different sub-regions, along with high child mortality rates, lack of basic health assistance and higher than average numbers of diseases. Malnutrition among pregnant women and children is high. Trafficking is one of the major concerns in that region, especially concerning women and girls. Education and school completion levels are also widely under the national average (Nguyen 2013: 3).

Geographical patterns increase the exposure to environmental disasters; in this case the overlap of the so-called “Ring of Fire” causing regular earthquakes and volcano eruptions and the typhoon belt, in particular prone to the formation of typhoons because of the high temperatures of the water. The provinces of Leyte and Samar are especially exposed to natural hazards due to their geological patterns and location. (SciDevNet 12.03.2014). Moreover ecological degradation and the socio-economic aspects of the region make it extremely vulnerable to natural disasters with higher human impacts than in other countries of that region (IDMC 2013a). According to the World Risk Index of 2013 the Philippines is ranked number 3 out of 173 countries for disaster exposure.

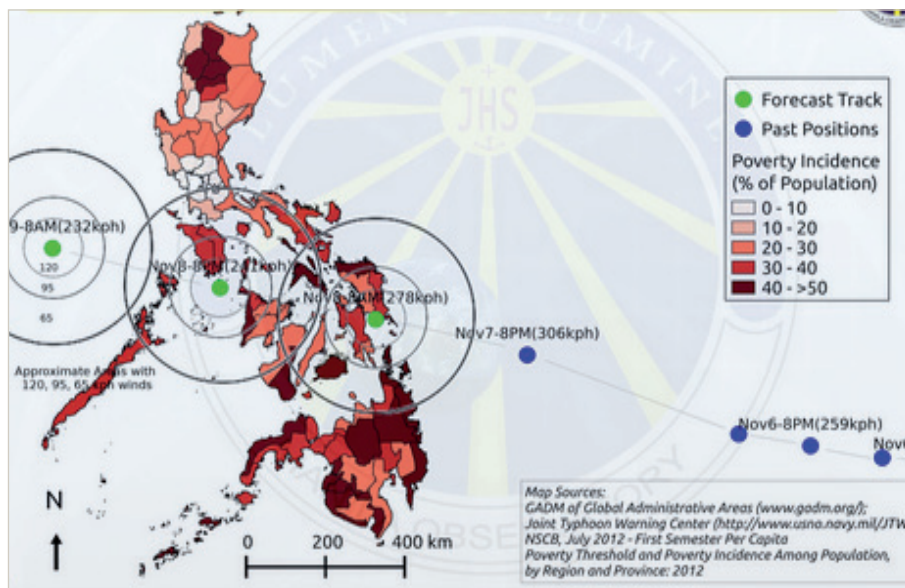
Super typhoon Haiyan was not the first event that made the Philippines rank high in international climate disasters, since 2009 the country has experienced 17 of the worst typhoons in history (Nunez 2013). The Archipelago is also one of the most at-risk countries of climate change according to UN data. Likewise in the assessment of the Germanwatch e.V. 2014 Vulnerability Index- the Philippines over the last ten years always appeared in the top 10 countries and ranks number 7 measuring the climate risk in the 10 most affected countries worldwide between 1993 and 2012. After Typhoon Bopha (locally known as Pablo) in December 2012 caused catastrophic damage and high human losses the country is now position 2 of the ranking, only preceded by Haiti. The Philippines is yearly hit by around 20 typhoons and in the past decade there has been an increase in the frequency and occurrence of storms and typhoons. Haiyan, for example, hit the country remarkably late for its magnitude and was already the 25<sup>th</sup> storm in the typhoon season, which lasts from end of June until December (Than 2013).

**Map 1. The path of Typhoon Haiyan and Affected Population**



Source 1: OCHA 10.11.2013: iv. Map provided courtesy of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations

**Map 2. Forecasted Track and Poverty Incidence**



Source 2: Image courtesy of the Manila Observatory with GADM, NSCB and JTWC data

The high vulnerability is exemplified in the environmentally induced displacements that are an often-recurring issue in the Philippines with the increasing number of rapid-onset natural hazards and more than 1 million displaced people each year. According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) figures, since December 2012 there have been three major natural disasters (Typhoon Bopha, Bohol earthquake and Typhoon Haiyan) where 23 million people were affected, about 8 million internally displaced along with massive damage or complete destruction of livelihood and shelter (IDMC 2013b).

### 1.2. Recent changes of disaster legislation

The Philippines has always been highly exposed to natural disasters and since the 16<sup>th</sup> century introduced first measures of disaster risk reduction (DRR) including an emphasis on ways to measure and record risk. The 2011 budget for DRR was about USD 624 million and represented 2 percent of the national budget (~0.28% of GDP). Additionally local authorities contributed to their respective “Local Disaster Risk Reduction Management Fund” (Chughtai 2013: 10).

Since mid-2000 the numbers of environmental disasters have been increasing and have led to the emergence of different legal acts, which were introduced during the last few years to support the displaced people inside the Philippines. In 2007 a disaster coordinating body introduced a cluster system that made it possible to coordinate and supervise humanitarian assistance and activity on the ground between the national state and the international community.

From 2009 important legislations were introduced in the protection of IDPs suffering from environmental or human-made disasters. The Climate Change Act of 2009 (CCA-2009) is an important legislation aimed to mitigate the risks caused by climate change, to reduce the risk of disasters and adapt to climate change. Important features of the legislation include pro-active measures supported by the law including local risk assessment and the identification of vulnerabilities as well as the empowerment of local authorities (Smith 2012).

The Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) was a 10-year plan introduced in 2005 by 168 UN member states aimed at reducing the risks of disaster. This framework highly influenced another important but also controversial legislation adopted in 2010, the Philippine National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act (PDRRM). The law received positive approval for being a passage from a *posteriori* response to disasters towards an *a priori* strategy of effective disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM). The latter foresaw a decentralization of authority and a reallocation of responsibility and resources on a sub-national and local level.

The promising legislation revealed many deficiencies in its implementation according to an IDMC study of 2013. Main challenges were on the one hand the lack of capacity at the local level and on the other hand political will to actually implement the strategies. Another important challenge remained regarding the protection of the displaced people and the need of a human rights framework, which could be applied for the protection of the displaced (IDMC & NRC 2013).

Finally in February 2013 a pioneering legislation was adopted, including the recognition of the right of protection and assistance of IDPs in the case of environmental, political or other cases of displacement. It would not only lead to increased accountability, but also preventative displacement measures and the guaranteeing of compensation payments. However the Filipino President Benigno Aquino claimed that parts of the legislation were unconstitutional and vetoed the law. An important reason for the veto was certainly the fact that the Commission of Human Rights (CHR) would have gained importance in defining terms of displacement and the amount of compensation payments as well the ability of individuals to hold the state accountable in cases of displacement. Even though the Philippines is considered a country with a solid and reliable National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management

Council (NDRRMC), the country was completely overwhelmed by typhoon Haiyan and therefore the question has to be raised if the warning systems are still efficient enough given future risks of disaster (Neussner 2014: 9).

## **2. BIG, BIGGER, HAIYAN**

### **2.1. Expectations and preparations before the storm**

The typhoon season of 2013 was not particularly violent at the beginning, but increased in severity from October onwards. Evacuation warnings from the government and media were already diffused a few days before the arrival of the typhoon. Prior announcements to the arrival of Haiyan were already a sign of the extreme intensity and degree of the storm. Several hurricane experts all over the world already expected the strongest typhoon of the season. The Manila Observatory warned on November 7, 2013 that Haiyan could cause “catastrophic damages especially in the Visayas and islands in Southern Luzon, as well as parts of Northern Mindanao” (Ortiz et al. 7.11.2013) taking into account the available data together with the regional socio-economic characteristics of the population and other regions that could be partly concerned by the storm. At this point the typhoon had already developed high-speed winds and was expected to bring heavy rainfalls, which could lead to floods and inundations.

In preparation of the storm around 800,000 people had been evacuated and personnel as well as equipment to face the disaster had been installed (Chughtai 2013: 4). Even before Haiyan finally hit the coast of the Philippines the high speeds of the typhoon were predicted to be more than 195 mph (315-km/h) correspondent to Category 5 winds. This intensity held up when Haiyan first hit Guiuan in Eastern Samar and only gradually decreased intensity when passing over Leyte (Neussner 2014: 11). According to surveys conducted in the region the population was generally aware of the arrival of the storm and need of evacuation. Still many admitted that they did not completely understand the extent and true nature of the typhoon. Despite the evacuation appeals, the real danger of the typhoon was either underestimated or people remained in their homes because they were frightened of possible lootings (Neussner 2014: 45).

As mentioned above the central islands of the Visayas are extremely vulnerable. Only one month before the arrival of Haiyan an earthquake in the Bohol-region with a 7.2-magnitude had led to wide destruction and a humanitarian disaster causing displacement of more than 340,000 people (IDMC, 2013b). The reconstruction process was still ongoing and many people were already at risk (Than, 2013), housed in tents and temporary shelters. In only three weeks these people were displaced a second time as with many other people who had been affected by previous floods, earthquakes and less devastating typhoons.

### **2.2. The Typhoon hits the coast – immediate consequences and action**

Haiyan turned out to be the strongest typhoon ever measured and the southern coastal areas of Eastern Samar province, where Haiyan first hit, had been over rolled by a storm surge of 10 meters height (OCHA-Philippines, 2013). According to OCHA in the municipality of Guiuan, the water-, power- and communication provision had completely collapsed, “all stores ha[d] been looted and medical facilities were completely destroyed. There [was] immediate need of food, water, medical supplies, shelter and generators. The team observed similar conditions in the surrounding municipalities” (OCHA-Philippines 2013).

In almost all regions the housing and public infrastructure got heavily damaged or destroyed. Furthermore, the shortage in food and water supply was a major problem as in some cases there was barely enough for a few days. Hospitals were also affected

and medical supply needed to accommodate the injured. The lack of precise information in the immediate aftermath of the crisis represented one main obstacle to rapid and effective action, as many areas remained inaccessible due to the destroyed infrastructure without any communication means.

Tacloban City was one of the most destroyed urban centers and was heavily affected by the typhoon with about 1.1 million houses destroyed (Duerr 28.02.2014). Major problems included not only lootings but also large groups of rural migrants heading to the city in hopes of assistance. The airport was also heavily damaged and the telecommunication network completely broke down.

On November 11 President Benigno Aquino declared a national state of calamity (OCHA-Philippines 2013) since the extent of the crisis became visible. The most affected regions were “Samar, Leyte, Cebu, Iloilo, Capiz, Aklan and Palawan”. An Action Plan requiring USD 301 million, later raised to USD 348 million, was launched by the Humanitarian Country Team to assist the affected people. Buildings and infrastructure were used to receive the entering help and provision. International mobilization was high and in a few days different funds were opened to collect donations and humanitarian assistance: the Haiyan Action Plan (OCHA-Philippines 2013) was launched on 12 November almost half of it funded by 40 UN Member States as well as the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), financed by public and private donors (IDMC 2013c).

### **3. TYPHOON HAIYAN: EVACUATION AND MASSIVE DISPLACEMENT**

#### **3.1. A highly complicated evacuation process**

The tragedy of Haiyan continued in the weeks following after the disaster with an overstraining situation for both national authorities as well as international humanitarian assistance. Although these groups had assisted in previous recovery processes, they were still lacking in personnel. The destroyed infrastructure worsened the situation and the responsive capabilities of local authorities. As local governments were completely overburdened or non-functioning due to displacement, the national government took over relief operations and military command centers were established in concerned areas (Tacloban, Cebu, Roxas) with an established humanitarian center.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) declared that Haiyan had produced approximately 4.1 million IDPs in different regions of the affected areas, of which 65 percent originated in the Western and Eastern Visayas. According to UNOCHA, only 2 percent (around 100,000 people) of these displaced were accommodated in one of the 381 evacuation sites and unfortunately they are often the poorest and most harshly affected. However nearly 4 million displaced people are living outside of these evacuation facilities. They mostly left the region or found dwelling in family or neighboring shelters, whereas almost all are concentrated in the Western and Eastern Visayas (OCHA & UNEP 14.01.2014).

Some of the evacuation centers were also heavily damaged during the storm or completely destroyed. Those who did not stay in evacuation centers and had the right to return to damaged houses, built tents and makeshift shelters (IDMC 2013c).

In the aftermath of Haiyan, evacuation centers that had not been destroyed by the storm, often settled in different public buildings, were very quickly overloaded. Main deficiencies were often the lack of adequate equipment, water and sanitation facilities and sufficient space to host the large groups of people in need of shelter. Overcrowded centers as in Roxas and a lack in camp management capacity in Tacloban were still to be found even one month after the crisis (IDMC 2013b). The dangers of poor conditions in evacuations centers have to be taken seriously as they can provoke the spread of diseases, lead to social problems and conflict, to name a few.

### **3.2. Wide displacement and migration outflows**

The displacement of over 4 million people mainly in the Western and Eastern Visayas remained a major challenge in the aftermath of Haiyan. The regions hit by Haiyan are among the poorest and most underdeveloped areas of the country and have a lower capacity to handle the crisis. More than 50 percent of the population in the Bicol and the Eastern Visayas live under the poverty line of USD 1.25 per day and malnutrition is widespread (IDMC 2013c). Long-term consequences include increasing indebtedness and vulnerabilities of an already poor population (Chughtai 2013: 2).

While disaster assistance slowly began to reach the most affected regions, the existing situation deteriorated further. A lack in shelter- and basic needs provisions resulted in a steady rise in the number of internal displacements. According to International Organization for Migration (IOM) estimates, from November 10th on, 5,000 people per day on average were leaving Tacloban towards the northern parts of the neighboring island of Samar or alternatively to the island of Cebu. The transport was extremely expensive and people were camping in the harbor or the airport in order to find a way to travel (IDMC 2013e).

The migration outflows further increased one week after the arrival of Haiyan and in an IOM report from the 14th of November, people leaving Tacloban via Ormoc city on the island of Leyte already accounted to 10,000 per day on average (IOM-Philippines Situation Report 14.11.2013).

The IOM was especially active to register the number of people forced to migrate through its Displacement Tracking Matrix tool (DTM), which was registered in various evacuation centers first in Tacloban and later also in Palawan. Food, water and health as well as beddings were identified as primary needs (IOM-Philippines Situation Report 15.11.2013). The Province of Palawan in the very Western part of the Visayas was the last Filipino Island hit by Haiyan, which damaged several cities in the northern parts and led to wide destruction of settlements. The huge lack of provision for basic human needs aggravated the situation even more (IOM-Philippines Situation Report 15.11.2013). The IOM's DTM pointed out main challenges on the concerned islands as to say the lack of electricity supply, of drinking water and shelter. Moreover the bad health situation and lack of medical assistance represented a major challenge while diarrhea and other diseases were expanding.

So-called temporary Family Rebuilding Centers or "tent cities" were provided by humanitarian organizations such as the Philippine Red Cross (PRC). These Centers are supposed to operate for a few months, after which inhabitants are supposed to find their own shelter in the immediate surroundings or to return back to the regions where they initially came from (Bongcac 04.03.2014).

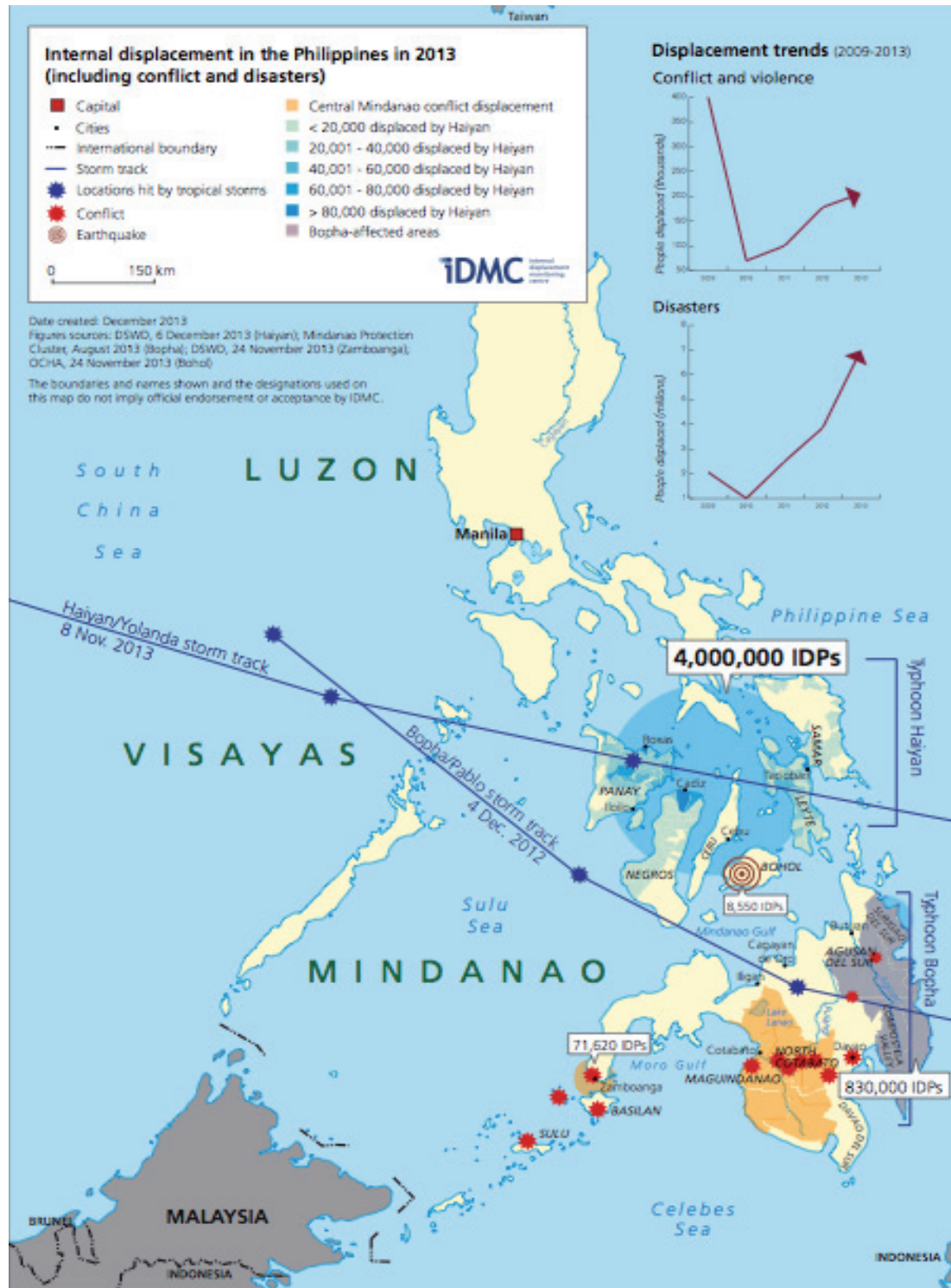
### **3.3. Important consequences for the most vulnerable groups**

The Philippines faced a range of problems in providing life-saving assistance, basic food, water, shelter and immediate health assistance. Vast destruction left many in remote locations non-contactable and without access to information. Two weeks after the disaster half of the affected people had still not received any humanitarian assistance, affecting the most vulnerable groups (pregnant women, children, the elderly and the disabled) either because there were no adequate programs designed to help these groups or because they were simply not reached with the existing aid relief (IDMC 09.12.2013). The risk of child abuse and trafficking grew significantly and according to IDMC after Haiyan, about 1.7 million of the displaced were children.

Among the displaced people only 103,000 could find shelter in one of the 385 evacuation centers run by the government, whereas 97 percent were living outside of those facilities. These already highly vulnerable groups are further exposed to risks of human exploitation as well as sexual abuse.

Abuses and violence in the aftermath of a great devastation does more commonly affect the most vulnerable groups: children, the elderly, the disabled, but especially

**Map 3. Internal Displacement after Typhoon Haiyan**





women and girls who became victims of hygienic and infrastructural deficiencies (lack of privacy or poor lighting) in and outside evacuation centers (IDMC 09.12.2013). Women as well as children faced a high risk of human trafficking in the aftermath of Haiyan, according to UNICEF approximately 1.7 million children were displaced, sometimes alone, towards big cities in search of work. Beside the psychological impacts of such a disaster, many children lost their daily routines and could not immediately return to school, often because the buildings were damaged during the storms or they were transformed into evacuation centers in the aftermath. Classes were often held only half-day and the lack of materials was widespread (Nguyen 2013: 1).

Haiyan also caused the displacement of more than 46,000 people over 60 years old, who not only lost their social networks but also were exposed to harsh conditions in evacuation centers without adequate attention from humanitarian assistance services (IDMC 09.12.2013).

Displacements were extremely harsh for pregnant women and in the first three months of 2014 around 1,000 births were expected daily in the regions affected by Haiyan (Nguyen 2013: 1).

In the case of displacement caused by Haiyan, food provision became a critical need for the displaced, as in their sudden migration they could only afford to take the minimum and were therefore highly dependent on emergency food assistance. According to IDMC, eleven days after the crisis about 2.5 million people in the most remote areas, especially in Capiz and Iloilo, were still cut off from services and could not get reached by food assistance services due to heavy structural damage (IDMC 2013b). This was expected after a national emergency, Haiyan IDP's food consumption levels did not only decrease in quantity, but also in quality and most of the displaced were at high risk for malnutrition.

In the aftermath of the crisis unconditional cash transfers were paid in the Western Visayas and helped relieve the population in these regions; but because the amount of payments relies on the fast progress of market recovery, expansion stayed quite humble with only 20 percent of the potential beneficiaries that were reached. In the Eastern Visayas, markets recovered slowly and almost no cash transfers were paid. (ICCHCT January 2014: 5). Rehousing of IDPs started very slowly and according to national authorities data will cost around USD 6 million (IDMC 2013e).

## **4. RETURNING AFTER TYPHOON HAIYAN**

### **4.1. Difficulties in the assessment of returning IDPs**

Among the internally displaced, the majority were deprived communities that are regularly affected by natural disasters and often have already experienced displacements. The affected find themselves in an endless downward spiral of poverty and vulnerability, which makes recovery nearly impossible. Accurate figures of the number of displaced people are difficult to obtain as displacement and resettling is constantly changing. Due to the fact that most of the displaced stayed with host families and relatives, it is expected that numbers may be underestimated, yet overestimation is also a possibility as 'double registration' is a common strategy to obtain additional assistance.

It is reported that a few days after the disaster many of the displaced people returned to their homes and it is generally expected that many of the internally displaced will return to their former regions, which were hit by the typhoon. This requires a major need of material and financial support which is necessary for the reconstruction process. Most of the people lost community facilities, as well as official and legal property documents, which must be recuperated. Assistance in reinstating landowner rights is also needed (IDMC 2013b).

Many of the displaced had already returned a few hours after the storm. There are recorded migration flows towards urban slums in other major cities of the Philippines such as Cebu City or Manila, where around 20,000 people arrived in the month after the disaster (IDMC 2013b). These groups of displaced people often arrived to overcrowded areas with high poverty levels and did not get the necessary assistance. Young people, especially those of working age left for big cities like Manila or Cebu in search of work and support, often leaving their children and relatives behind (UNHCR 06.12.2013). However, some fail to find a job and to rebuild a new life in the big urban centers that are already overcrowded and are sometimes forced to return to their regions a few weeks or even several months later. Returnees can get financial support from the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) to pay relocation fees but the costs usually exceed the amount paid by the Department. Returnees often have to pay additional fees to return from the big cities (Henneka & Chowdhury 2014). To overcome this problem, some regional governments have tried to organize collective repatriation for small groups of displaced people by the Air Force planes or Navy ships. This would also allow the returnees to take the goods they have accumulated during their displacement (Bongcac 04.03.2014).

A few months following the disaster many have returned and started rebuilding what Haiyan has destroyed, businesses reopened and houses were reconstructed. By the end of January, people living in displacement sites had decreased to around 26,000, meaning that many have used the emergency shelter material to rebuild on the areas which were affected by the typhoon (ICCHCT January 2014: 9). Already one month after the catastrophe tens of thousands of displaced people started to come back, with nearly 100,000 remaining in the existing evacuation centers. Humanitarian organizations like UNHCR distributed tents as temporary shelters, as well as solar lights for electricity provision. By February 2014, three months after the landfall of Haiyan, 5,000 people have still not returned to their homes in Tacloban. This has important economic impacts on the country; Haiyan is estimated to have caused an economic loss of 0.9 percent of GDP in 2013, a sum of 101.79 billion Filipino Pesos (Neussner 2014: 10).

#### **4.2. Long-term challenges for returnees**

In the immediate aftermath of typhoon Haiyan improvement of the situation was attributed to the rapid humanitarian response. However many challenges still remain for returning IDPs, who are facing difficulties rebuilding their lives as a result of decreasing aid inflows.

##### **Agriculture and Nutrition**

A few months after the storm, about one third of the affected population still remained food insecure (OCHA & UNEP 14.01.2014). The returnees are also at high risk for nutrition deprivation because of the great agricultural losses and destruction of material induced by Haiyan. According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) devastation of the agricultural sector, as well as of fishery and forestry, is immense and will endanger the provision of food for several thousand people. Most fishermen and farmers have lost their livelihoods. Without assistance to provide the needed seeds and material, they will not be able to provide crops in the next season. When Haiyan hit the country the rice-planting season was just about to begin (FAO-Philippines 2013a). This will have devastating effects not only on the regional population, but also on the entire country as these crops make up for one third of the nation's rice production (IDMC 2013b).

The coconut industry was also heavily impacted with many trees damaged or destroyed. As a result over 1 million livelihoods are concerned especially because the plantation of new coconut trees takes several years (FAO-Philippines 2013c).

Even though the crop production of rice and cereals at the national level seems to be secured, assistance has to concentrate on regions that were affected by the typhoon (FAO-Philippines 2013b). Agricultural infrastructure has to be rearranged in order to assure cultivation and provision in the long-term. Rice input packages were distributed by humanitarian organizations, but because of heavy rain and flooding at the start of 2014 and the missing drainage capacity the rice crops were once again destroyed. About 1,000 livelihoods were affected (ICCHCT January 2014: 5).

The provision of Health and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) services was one of the most urgent needs from the very beginning onwards. Various humanitarian actors contributed to a swift response in providing needed services as well as supporting further local capacity building. However, long-term solutions for the most vulnerable people and those living in remote areas remain very difficult. The transition between first emergency responses towards effective recovery still remains a major challenge (ICCHCT January 2014: 17ff.).

### **Rebuilding**

The typhoon has damaged about 1,140,332 houses, half of which were totally destroyed (OCHA & UNEP 14.01.2014). Especially problematic were regions where even a few months after the typhoon destruction is widespread, rebuilding is slow and reconstruction is of poor quality. Many returnees began to rebuild their houses with the material. Due to the high costs of rebuilding, people are often unable to replace their professional equipment that was damaged by the storm. The storm also destroyed small businesses, traditional vehicles such as fisher boats and transport means in general. One of the crisis responses by the 'Shelter Cluster' were to provide households with tarpaulins, but given the extent of the damages and the high number of people affected, a compromise of one tarpaulin per household was met. However in the long-term this is considered to be insufficient taking into account the weather conditions and the short lifespan of the material. Finally from the 400,000 households that obtained emergency shelter assistance 83 percent received only 1 tarpaulin (ICCHCT January 2014: 9).

Equally significant, almost all shelter assistance (95 percent) was given to coastal areas, while 40 percent of damaged houses are inland (ICCHCT January 2014: 9).

Schools and other public buildings were also heavily damaged and many were not rebuilt in an adequate timeframe. By the 6<sup>th</sup> of January 2014 most of the schools had reopened, nevertheless only some could afford to open half-day. Material remains scarcely available and the fact that other buildings are still damaged means that some children stay outside of school for an extended time.

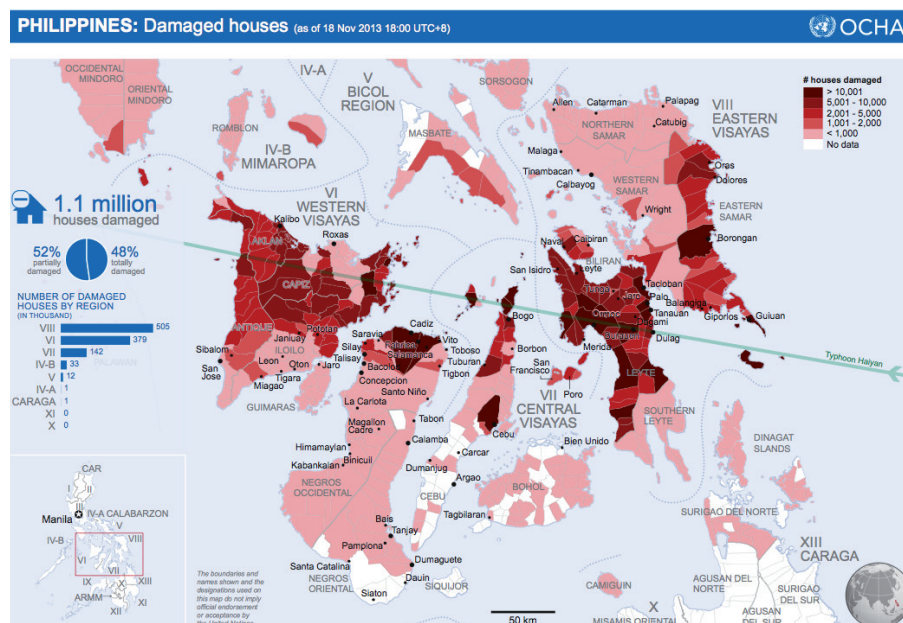
Rebuilding assistance has been unsuccessful in many regions and as evacuation centers began to close while relocation sites were yet unfinished, people have started to resettle in 'dangerous areas', regions declared unsafe by the government because of their immediate proximity to the sea. This has led to increased vulnerability for those who are highly probable to suffer from future storms and environmental disasters (Yeo 12.02.2014). However even the declaration of the so-called 'No build' zones has led to resistance by inhabitants claiming the deprivation of livelihood. The fishermen in Tacloban City for instance, protested against these measures (Yeo 2014).

According to UNOCHA (16 January 2014) up to two months after the typhoon, many people were still dependent on humanitarian assistance and only 52 percent of the needed funding had reached the Philippines. Rebuilding was extremely slow and by February 2014, only 20 percent of the funding for material and tools to rebuild the houses was secured. The forthcoming rainy season complicates the process even further.

Apart from the significant lack of financial support for reconstruction, the unclear specification of the 'no build' zones (ICCHCT January 2014: 9) complicates

and prolongs the rebuilding process. People placed in so called ‘bunkhouses’<sup>1</sup> or people who returned to live in ‘no build’ zones will likely suffer from repeated displacement, furthering the demand for well-planned relocation sites.

**Map 4. Damaged houses by Typhoon Haiyan**



Source 4: OCHA 18.11.2013: iv. Map provided courtesy of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations

By the end of February, only 20 percent of the city of Tacloban had restored electricity. Many were forced to rush home before sunset and the activities of small family businesses to big firms remained extremely restrained as a result of infrastructural deficiencies (Duerr 28.02.2014).

**Employment and Economic recovery**

Vast destruction accompanied by widespread displacement has led to the loss of livelihood and employment of millions of workers. According to the International Labor Organization, about 6 million workers were affected in total, whereas prior to the typhoon 2.6 million were already in a vulnerable state in poor regions (ILO 17.02.2014). Two types of professional activity can be characterized: agriculture and fishery in one category and non-agriculture/non-fishery activities in the other. However all employment sectors have experienced an approximate 50 percent decline in profits (OCHA & UNEP 14.01.2014).

One of the strategies implemented was the inclusion of the affected workers in restoration of the public and economic infrastructure. The initial target of 200,000 workers was missed by far and only 15 percent received short-term trainings and were engaged in the restoration projects. More successful was a cash-for-work activity in

1. Bunkhouse can be defined as “a rough building, often with bunk beds, used for sleeping quarters, as for ranch hands, migratory workers, or campers”(Dictionary.com).

Leyte and Eastern-Samar where people were engaged in clearing the debris of public buildings. Especially in the short-term the cash input proved to have a crucial impact on IDPs (ICCHCT January 2014: 15). With international support the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) set up other emergency employment programs in some regions offering a decent job, social security provision and skill-trainings (ILO 17.02.2014).

In order to secure fast resumption of agricultural activity, rice seed input packages were distributed shortly after the disaster to over 100,000 households in order to secure cultivation in the following planting season. This measure successfully supplied 1,000 households that were affected by the floods. Concerning fishery, the repair or distribution of material like boats and general gear for fishing, were still not vastly needed. However the FAO together with the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resource (BFAR) are initiating information campaigns and are working especially on needs assessments to identify the best solutions (ICCHCT January 2014: 13). Concerning employment and economic development, IDPs and returnees are still suffering from under-employment and insufficient economic activities due to the lack of funding, professional reintegration programs and long-term solutions.

## 5. POLICY RESPONSES AND CHALLENGES

Completely overwhelmed by the Haiyan disaster, President Aquino admitted: "The system failed. We had a breakdown in power, a breakdown in communications, a breakdown in practically everything" (GMA News/ HS 19.11.2013).

The Filipino disaster management is coordinated and led by the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), which handle different public requests as well as the military and representatives of the civil society (Chughtai 2013: 7). Apart from the life-saving needs provided by national and international institutions, future planning of options to support the displaced after environmentally induced catastrophes were on the government's agenda. The Filipino government introduced a recovery and rehabilitation strategy, the "Reconstruction Assistance on Yolanda (RAY)" plan (Neussner 2014: 10). The National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) established a framework and an investment of PHP 361 billion, more than USD 8 billion, over a period of three years in the rebuilding process of buildings and societal infrastructure (education, health, social services, and employment). The objective was to not only re-install pre-disaster conditions, but also to increase risk prevention (Nguyen 2013: 2). The complexity of the crisis led to a disordered coordination and lack of leadership in disaster management, but was then resolved on December 2, when former Senator Pantillo Lacson, was appointed head of rehabilitation and reconstruction (Chughtai 2013: 7).

Haiyan was classified *Level 3 emergency* with the *highest disaster response*<sup>2</sup> by the UN and within a day a multi-faceted "emergency response team" was enacted. While some UN agencies displayed a quick and efficient response, others struggled initially but implementation gradually improved over the first few weeks (Chughtai 2013: 7). Both international and national partners coordinated the initial responses and just two days after Haiyan's landfall, 12 clusters to supervise and coordinate humanitarian action began in Manila and sub-clusters were enacted in the concerned regions.

Regional and international financial support was also important and exceeded

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2. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Transformative Agenda (TA) introduced Level 3 (L3) emergency for major humanitarian crises. The time-bound L3 was issued by the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) and obligates humanitarian agencies to make available "the leadership capacities, funds, supplies and personnel required to support the Government's Response." (ICVA 2013).

the attention and financial support of other humanitarian crisis. The Philippines' co-members of the Association of Southeast Asian States (ASEAN) all contributed to humanitarian donations. Internationally the financial response<sup>3</sup> was high with USD 391 million mobilized in the first three weeks. Traditional donors, some Gulf countries, multilateral organizations and private individual donors also greatly contributed financially (Chughtai 2013: 7).

Information for IDPs remained a problem for an extended period and many were unaware of relief distributions. Despite the improvement of logistical problems, those in remote areas could not be reached or receive any relief measures even two weeks after the first landfall (IDMC 2013e). Precise data and information on IDPs is crucial when responding to such disasters and must be available throughout the initial phases of displacement through returning and even after building up their new livelihood.

The vast financial assistance from national and international mobilization in the aftermath of Haiyan contributed greatly to relieve the situation of the displaced. However additional financial support especially long-term is needed to assist the people in returning or resettling. A major source of difficulty for long-term planning possibly stems partly from inadequate accountability of local authorities (IDMC December 2013). Further capacity building at the local level is necessary, including the acknowledgement of IDPs rights' by local governments and efficient data collection.

International funding for immediate recovery was important for broad support of urgent humanitarian needs. An elevated humanitarian emergency level was declared and all international agencies and institutions agreed to assist the Filipino government and even sent deputies into sub-regions to assist the local authorities directly.

NGOs and local community groups displayed great effectiveness and played a crucial role in the first days following the disaster. Even still, the main challenges were modes of delivery due to a lack of transport means and destroyed infrastructure (Chughtai 2013: 8).

International organizations played an important role in assisting the government financially and enabled humanitarian action, but assisted with the coordination and administration process of evacuation and resettlement. Financial assistance and possible long-term underfunding is a grave concern due to the immense need for infrastructure. Also as demonstrated in the case of Haiyan, additional solutions at community level are needed, with regards to access to remote areas, and accurate information about the local population, infrastructural conditions and general needs. Communities should be further integrated in the development of protection networks and design of response mechanisms (IDMC, 2013b).

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

The case of Haiyan in the Philippines has shown the world once again how destructive environmental disasters can be, how heavily they affect human livelihood and how they may lead to large displacements with important short- and long-term consequences. Even in the months following the disaster, the most severely affected regions still suffered from vast destruction and a slow recovery and reconstruction process. Entire cities and areas are still in ruins and have not recovered economic activity. Basic life conditions remain alarmingly low (Del Mundo 11.03.2014). Given the violent situation of its population after Haiyan, the Philippines currently finds itself

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3. The largest contributors were: US, UK, Japan, Australia, Canada, Sweden, UAE, NL & Saudi Arabia (Chughtai 2013: 7).

in urgent need of adaptation and protection measures as it is a country extremely vulnerable to natural hazards. Innovated legislation needs to be established to allow for the realization of IDPs' rights.

### **Funding and institutional capacity**

Although international aid was critical in supporting on-site assistance, the case of Haiyan has revealed gaps in essential provision of nutrition and shelter. We could also observe an urgent need to improve coordination and management between the different actors and local authorities. Increased long-term funding is needed to support the recovery process of concerned populations in these vulnerable regions.

Greater transparency is also needed, as demonstrated in claims that local and regional officials unequally distributed funds. The availability and distribution of funds must be public and transparent to avoid mistrust and the disadvantages for some groups and individuals (Chughtai 2013: 7).

Local actors have to be further empowered as they are proven to have a great impact on DRR and coordination in the aftermath of the crisis. There should be an increased participation on behalf of local governments and NGOs and civil society members should be further integrated in policy response designs and implementation following natural disasters in order to facilitate swift recovery.

### **Humanitarian assistance, reintegration and resettling**

When IDPs return to rebuild their houses they need special food assistance and compensation payments for full recovery. In the case of Haiyan we could see that the support is often not offered long enough and distributed unequally. In the Eastern and Western Visayas especially, many people live in remote areas and it can take several days to reach them.

Returnees also require special attention and adaptation measures. The local population has to be sufficiently prepared for future disasters and to decrease their vulnerabilities during natural hazards. Relocation to safer areas has to happen as quickly as possible in order to avoid inadequate temporary solutions. The responses to Haiyan have also exposed important deficiencies in construction including of the evacuation centers. Therefore norms and minimum standards are needed to ensure durable reconstruction and avoidance of the structural vulnerabilities. In the future, more coordinated action is needed and the concerned population has to be well informed and included in the decision-making process.

As the Eastern and Western Visayas are regularly hit by environmental disasters, inhabitants highly vulnerable and often experience repeated displacements. Rapid and efficient assistance is needed in order to find long-term solutions to stabilize the livelihood of these IDPs, prevent the risk of future displacement and increase the capacity to absorb external shocks (IDMC, 2013b). Post-Haiyan rehabilitation and planning activities have to take geological characteristics and elements of risk exposure into account in order to make the region more resilient towards future natural disasters (SciDevNet 12.03.2014).

### **Legal protection and ownership rights**

Returnees often face serious problems in claiming their property and land ownerships and their rights need to be reinforced by assistance and a clear legal framework. Likewise returnees have to be supported through compensation and reconstruction programs to rebuild their livelihoods as soon as possible (IDMC 2013b). IDPs who were victims of lootings or those who lost official documents should have access to compensation payments and administrative assistance.

The Philippines should advance in introducing an innovative legislation framework in order to protect and assist IDPs. They may set a milestone in this field, acting as global model for other concerned nations.

### International negotiations and climate change-induced displacement

The increasing numbers of persons displaced by natural hazards and environmental degradation are on the rise. Yet they cannot be completely ascribed to climate change. An urgent need exists for more in-depth research and data collection to support international policy-making to assist IDPs hit by natural disasters.

During the the 2013 COP taking place in Warsaw, expectations were high that the disastrous images from displaced people and complete destruction after typhoon Haiyan could have an impact on the debate about compensation payments between global partners, but especially between industrialized and developing countries. The prevention of displacement and disaster management *ex ante*<sup>4</sup> has to be the central issue in the discourse instead of limiting the negotiations to *a posteriori* consequences like 'loss and damage' mechanisms<sup>5</sup> (IDMC 2013e,f).

### Risk reduction and adaptation measures

Past experiences have shown that the step-up of investment in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) was efficient and *a fortiori*<sup>6</sup> increased also by international donors. Warning systems have to become more widespread and affordable so they can be utilized on a large scale (World Bank, Adaptation). Internationally, further exchange of experiences and lessons learned are needed to generate best practices. Haiyan has exposed the vulnerability of poor people and the very harsh ways they are hit by natural disasters. Therefore the reduction of poverty and inequality levels simultaneously with the empowerment of the most vulnerable groups of the society has to be further pursued (Chughtai 2013).

### A renewed debate on disaster risk management

The great humanitarian devastation consequences caused by Haiyan have opened up a new debate about the legal framework and the instruments of Disaster Risk Management. The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) launched a debate with the aim to reform the existing Hyogo Framework for Action<sup>7</sup>, which was introduced after the great disaster of the tsunami in the Indian Ocean in 2004. It can be inferred that environmental catastrophes will be multiplied in the future and not only heavily affect the Philippines, but many other regions in the world. This has created an important demand, which is to develop a "new global framework for disaster risk reduction" (UNISDR 12.11.2013).

Since the beginning of 2014 and in preparation for the upcoming typhoon season, UNISDR and global insurance companies have developed and presented a new catastrophe scheme for the Philippines in order to enable and facilitate budgetary support in cases of natural disasters: *The Philippines Risk and Insurance Scheme for Municipalities (PRISM)* (UNISDR 20.01.2014). The new scheme responds to the need to disaggregate and simplify insurance payments as well as the empowerment of municipalities and affected people, which will be more protected and covered by insurance in case of natural disasters. ♦

4. 'Ex ante' can be defined as "Based on forecasts rather than actual results" (Oxford Dictionaries).

5. Introduced at COP19 in Warsaw (2013) these mechanisms aim to identify and promote efforts to address loss and damage in vulnerable developing countries associated with impacts of climate change (UNFCCC 2013).

6. 'A fortiori' can be defined as "Used to express a conclusion for which there is stronger evidence than for a previously accepted one" (Oxford Dictionaries).

7. The Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) UN-Plan to reduce the risks of disaster (see section 2.2 in this paper).



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