



## EVALUATION of the NCCP PROJECT

### *Capacitating Churches and Building Disaster and Climate Change Resilient Communities*

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## Executive Summary

The National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP) has made great advances in practicing the principle of learning from the people, and this three-year capacity building project is a reflection of this feat. Aiming to expand its reach in building communities that are more resilient to disaster and climate change through advocacy and capacity building, the project fittingly addresses the vulnerabilities of its member churches and their communities. Consistent with its goal and objectives, the project's main intervention strategy focused on building the capacities of its primary beneficiaries – the church and the communities – so they can be more resilient against disasters and climate change.

The effectiveness of the project in achieving its objectives has been influenced by the positive impact of NCCP's commitment to adhere to standards of quality and accountability in its response activities which carries its own weight in the communities alone. Project interventions such as orientation workshops on DRRM-CCA, disaster and risk assessment and EPRP, enhanced the capacities of the church clergy and lay members. Consequently, their organisational structures were also strengthened – the RECs revitalized and the ECUDREAMC activated. At the community level, the barangay DRRM structures were animated and members of the Barangay Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (BDRRMC) were capacitated through DRRM and CCA orientation workshops as well. Emergency response activities in the communities became the venue for the RECs to demonstrate their leadership and capacities in disaster response at the same time enrich their experience and practice in coordinative and cooperative action. For implementing partners in the NCR, the project has facilitated organisational growth.

Although the pandemic has presented significant and multifaceted challenges regarding project implementation, it has not impeded the achievement of project objectives. Awareness raising and capability building activities were refocused to address the immediate and ongoing threat of the pandemic. Alternative methods in conducting activities were explored to comply with required quarantine and safety protocols.

The project has been a venue for NCCP to fortify its rootedness in the communities, leading the way also for its member churches to enrich themselves. It has given a deeper value to the experience and mission of integrating with the communities and ecumenical work. Another impact of the project stems from the strengthening of the church's organisational structures as its RECs and individual church leaders step up and take bigger strides in leading and initiating actions for their communities. The DRRM orientation and education sessions conducted as project interventions have effectively influenced the RECs and communities to adopt NCCP's DRRM framework. Among the Churches, the four RECs (CAVREA, BREC, STREAM and PACLEA) have all established their own ECUDREAMCs, formulated their respective EPRPs and conducted varied emergency responses in their areas.

The project has impacted positively on the communities in different ways – it has enriched community relations, opened opportunities for growth, and improved individual and community well-being. Project interventions have fostered unity as seeds of cooperation were planted and new buds of partnerships bloomed among the members and leaders, as well as across different sectors, in the communities. The project has also fortified the communities' collective consciousness on the right to health and information through COVID-19 education.

The project has contributed to NCCP's continuous effort to improve its DRR program as a whole. It has been significant in enriching experiences in humanitarian response and developing institutional capacities, providing the opportunity to upgrade its DRRM program at the national and local levels. Through implementation of project activities, the Secretariat have deeper understanding and stronger grasp of DRRM as they learned how to promote the DRRM framework within the different contexts of CCA, the pandemic and protection. Skills in management and advocacy were enhanced as project staff adapted to fluid situations and faced various challenges.

### *Recommendations*

Sustaining efforts in capacity building of the RECs will amplify the capacity of the churches to act as first responders in their communities during emergencies. NCCP can conduct capacity building activities periodically to reinforce its institutional capacity as well as strengthen the complementing structures in its member churches through the RECs and ECUDREAMCs. In turn, capacity building activities for beneficiary communities may be done through the capacitated RECs and member churches.

Program interventions involving awareness raising have been fruitful and effective, thus it is crucial to sustain efforts in education and combine these with advocacy activities to further the gains achieved in project implementation. Community level CCA advocacy activities in conjunction with planning for CCA project initiatives would boost DRRM capacities of the community. In line with enhancing advocacy efforts, it is recommended that more activities be conducted at the local and national levels on the advocacy of humanitarian and DRR-CCA issues. Internal advocacy of CCA at the church/REC level could be given weight in the context of the church's stewardship role in caring for the environment.

Institutional capacity building may be focused on upgrading staff competence in project monitoring, planning for specific programs such as advocacy, networking and local resource mobilization. Developing a comprehensive resource mobilization plan is also another recommendation. This can include exploring areas for collaboration with ecumenical partners in increasing localization/local resource generation and tie-up with advocacy or DRR promotion efforts, conducting sharing/learning workshops on good practices and lessons learned between RECs and launching the volunteer program.