



Responding to Disasters and Displacement in a Changing Climate:

Case Studies

Asia Pacific National Societies in Action





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International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Asia Pacific Regional Office
The Ampwalk
Suite 10.02 North Block
218 Jalan Ampang
50450 Kuala Lumpur
Malaysia

Tel. +603 9207 5700
www.ifrc.org/asia-pacific

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FOREWORD

Disasters and the adverse impacts of climate change are already leading to the forced displacement of more than 20 million people each year.¹ The vast majority of this displacement (more than 80 percent) occurs in the Asia Pacific region. The adverse impacts of climate change are expected to further increase the numbers of people forced to flee their homes and lands. People and communities displaced by disasters and climate change often face a critical humanitarian situation – with needs ranging from emergency shelter, clean water and sanitation to health care and protection. Many displaced people also require support to rebuild their lives and livelihoods, and to achieve safe, voluntary and dignified durable solutions.

Addressing the humanitarian needs of people displaced by disasters and climate change is a global priority for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), and particularly for the IFRC and National Societies in Asia Pacific region. This priority is reflected in our new Strategy 2030, our global Movement Ambitions to Address the Climate Crisis document and in our regional Asia Pacific Framework for Action on Migration and Displacement.

We are delighted to share this collection of case studies of Asia Pacific National Societies in action. These case studies are designed to complement the 2018 IFRC report entitled Disasters and Displacement in a Changing Climate: The Role of Asia Pacific National Societies. These case studies reflect the important work that many National Societies are already undertaking to address this challenge, including with the close support of Partner National Societies, and the IFRC across the region.

We appreciate the important partnership with the Danish Red Cross to develop these case studies. The Danish Red Cross is present in 14 countries across the globe, working together with National Societies in their local contexts on a range of priority issues including migration, displacement and climate change. This collection is also part of a new partnership with the University of Copenhagen on international law, climate change and displacement. We greatly value and welcome important partnerships for the Movement such as this.

I hope that you find this collection not only informative, but also a call to action – for us all to better understand the critical humanitarian consequences of climate and disaster displacement in Asia Pacific, and the vital importance of investing in and supporting local communities and local actors to address this urgent humanitarian challenge.

Alexander Matheou
IFRC Asia Pacific Regional Director

¹ IDMC, Disaster Displacement: A Global Review 2008-2018, 2019, <https://www.internal-displacement.org/publications/disaster-displacement-a-global-review>.



Meer Abdullah / ARCS

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A special thanks to the Danish Red Cross and Miriam Cullen, Assistant Professor of Climate and Migration Law at the University of Copenhagen for making this collaboration possible.

Our deep appreciation and thanks to the Asia Pacific National Societies, Partner National Societies and the IFRC delegations across the region, who shared with us their knowledge, perspectives and insights, and who are actively undertaking diverse and important initiatives to address the humanitarian impacts of disaster displacement.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, in-country research was unfortunately not possible, and therefore the report is based mainly on desk-research and remote interviews.

INTRODUCTION

The forced displacement of individuals and communities as a result of disasters and the adverse impacts of anthropogenic climate change has been described as one of the greatest humanitarian challenges of the 21st century.² Between 2009 and 2019, the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) recorded a yearly average of 22.7 million people newly displaced by sudden-onset hazards, including floods, storms, wildfires, extreme winter conditions, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and landslides.³ In the six months between September 2020 and February 2021, 12.5 million people were displaced globally. Of all global displacement, 60 percent occurred in the Asia Pacific region with the majority of people being displaced due to climate and weather-related disasters.

Estimated numbers of people displaced by slow-onset disasters worldwide remain imprecise, as data are difficult to obtain. The difficulty in obtaining accurate data on slow-onset displacement is partly due to the complex and dynamic process of an area becoming progressively less habitable, and livelihoods being gradually eroded, resulting in displacement or migration.⁴ Indicative estimates from the World Bank suggest that up to 90 million people may be displaced during this century by sea level rise alone.⁵

Displacement can have devastating impacts on those displaced, as well as on the communities that receive and support them. Many displaced people have critical assistance and protection needs, ranging from emergency shelter, health and psycho-social support, access to clean water and sanitation, protection against violence including gender-based violence and child protection, as well as longer-term support to recover and realize durable solutions.⁶ Displacement disproportionately affects already vulnerable and marginalised groups, including women, children, the elderly, migrants and refugees, stateless people, minority groups and people with disabilities or serious health conditions.

Climate change is expected to amplify the existing challenges associated with disaster displacement, and the humanitarian impacts on those affected. More frequent and intense sudden-onset hazards are expected to exacerbate displacement and humanitarian needs.⁷ Slow-onset hazards linked to climate change - including those related to increasing temperatures, sea-level rise, ocean acidification, salinisation, glacial retreat, land and forest degradation, biodiversity loss and desertification - are also expected to directly and indirectly lead to further displacement.

² The Nansen Initiative. Agenda for the Protection of Cross-Border Displaced Persons in the Context of Climate Change, December 2015.

³ Norwegian Refugee Council/Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. Global Report on Internal Displacement 2020, April 2020.

⁴ Disaster Displacement - A Global Review, 2008-2018. IDMC, p. 11.

⁵ Dasgupta, S., Laplante, B., Meisner, C., Wheeler, D., Yan, J., The impact of sea level rise on developing countries: a comparative analysis (English), 2007. Policy, Research working paper; no. WPS 4136. Washington, DC: World Bank.

⁶ Disasters and Displacement. The Role of Asia Pacific National Societies. IFRC, 2018, p. 5.

⁷ See, for example, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Assessment Report, Working Group II: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability.

Legal and policy frameworks

Disaster displacement has been increasingly recognised in a range of legal and policy frameworks at the national, regional and global levels. Key global frameworks that address disaster displacement include the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, the 2016 Agenda for Humanity, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) 2015 Paris Agreement, the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) and the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR).

In the Asia Pacific region, these global agreements are complemented by regional and national initiatives, including the Bangladesh National Strategy on the Management of Disaster and Climate Induced Internal Displacement (2015); the regional Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (2017); the Vanuatu National Policy on Climate Change and Disaster-Induced Displacement (2018); the Fiji Planned Relocation Guidelines (2018); and the Fiji Displacement Guidelines in the Context of Climate Change and Disasters (2019).

These frameworks emphasise the need for an integrated and cross-sectoral approach to addressing disaster displacement - spanning disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, humanitarian assistance, human rights and refugee protection, and development initiatives.

The Role of the IFRC and Asia Pacific National Societies

Asia Pacific National Societies play an active and vital role supporting affected communities. Approaches by Asia Pacific National Societies include initiatives to analyse displacement risk, protect against displacement, and in the event of displacement, support assistance, protection and the attainment of durable solutions.

This collection of case studies demonstrates the diversity and strength of National Society initiatives in the Asia Pacific region. These case studies complement the broader IFRC report from 2018 entitled Disasters and Displacement in a Changing Climate: The Role of Asia Pacific National Societies. These case studies include examples of responses to sudden-onset disasters (including by Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, Fiji Red Cross Society, Vanuatu Red Cross, Nepal Red Cross, Philippine Red Cross and Indonesian Red Cross (PMI)) as well as to slow-onset disasters (by Mongolian Red Cross and Afghan Red Crescent Society). These case studies highlight initiatives in response to both geophysical and weather-related hazards through disaster risk reduction; disaster preparedness, response, recovery; and the attainment of durable solutions.

The case studies, including the lessons learned and recommendations are designed to enhance the collective understanding across the Movement of Asia Pacific National Societies initiatives to address climate and disaster displacement. The case studies are also intended to support relevant government representatives, regional and global institutions, academia, civil society organizations and United Nations agencies to deepen their understanding of the core mandate and strengths of Asia Pacific National Societies in addressing displacement in the context of disasters and climate change.



always there

COMMUNITY DISASTER PLAN, WAIVUNIA VILLAGE

I TUTU (O CEI)	I TAVI ME QARAVI (NA CAVA) Na veisau ni roka ni kulla e vakatakilakilatata tiko ni sa toro voleka sara tiko mai na gauna ni vakacaca. Me tauca na lewe ni veitagede ni veiqaravi ko "Turaga Ni Koro, Liuliu ni vanua se dua ka sadigitaki mai na vanua".	TUVATUVA NI VEIQARAVI
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VAKARAU (VULAVULA) Sa kune e dua na ua ni drakica ka rawa ni vakavuleqa e na lomani 72 na auwa mai oqo.	I VAKARO (DROMODROMO) Na leqa e rawa ni yaco e na loma ni 24 na auwa mai oqo.	SA YACO TIKO NA LEQA (DAMUDAMU) Sa tiko leqa na vanua ni sa tatara tiko o leqa.	SA NADAKU NA LEQA (DROKADROKA) Sa sivi na leqa. (Sivi e 24 ki na 48 na auwa)	Me vakasavui nai tukutuku ni I tavi sa qaravi vei:
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Kaciva na bose ni vakavakarau	Raica me ra vakarau na lewe ni koro	Raica me ra taqomaki vinaka na lewe ni koro.	Vakadidike Taumada ni vakacaca	Rivote vei PA
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Raici me vakadre vinaka na vale ka maroroi kece na I yaya ni bera ni vakalala na vale. Vakarau na kakai Maroroi vinaka na yadega qase, vakaleqai na I tuvaki ni yago, marama, gone kei na tauvimate.	Vakadidike Taumada ni vakacaca	Me qarauni na tiko savasava, tu vakarau veitaqomaki kei maroroi ni lawa.	Vakadidike Taumada ni vakacaca	Rivote vei PA
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Vakarauteki na I yaya vakasaqa. Sokumuni ni buka kei na koro. Sokomuni na vakamatau ni Samaki na koro.	Vakadidike Taumada ni vakacaca	Me qarauni na tiko savasava, tu vakarau veitaqomaki kei maroroi ni lawa.	Vakadidike Taumada ni vakacaca	Rivote vei PA
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Tuki vinaka na vale, musuki kau e na vakarauteki kakana kei na koro.	Vakadidike Taumada ni vakacaca	Me qarauni na tiko savasava, tu vakarau veitaqomaki kei maroroi ni lawa.	Vakadidike Taumada ni vakacaca	Rivote vei PA
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Vakarauteki na ra qaravi kinamate kei na koro. Vakarau vinaki ni veivukuni Me tiko na nasivakarauni.	Vakadidike Taumada ni vakacaca	Me qarauni na tiko savasava, tu vakarau veitaqomaki kei maroroi ni lawa.	Vakadidike Taumada ni vakacaca	Rivote vei PA
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OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Investment in and focus on **local actors and local responders** is vital to support faster, more efficient, and more relevant support to affected communities. Involving affected people in disaster preparedness enhances resilience, contributes to a 'whole-of-society' approach, and strengthens social cohesion and builds trust.
- Meaningful **community engagement and accountability (CEA)** can and should contribute to a nuanced and longer-term perspective on displacement. Affected communities – including both displaced and host communities – can play a central role in provision of accurate information and decision-making connected to recovery, including on durable solutions to displacement.
- A **protection, gender and inclusion (PGI)**-informed approach and response must be at the forefront of any humanitarian and longer-term recovery support. This should include awareness-raising and services in prevention and response to sexual- and gender-based violence (SGBV), as outlined in the IFRC Minimum Standards for Protection, Gender and Inclusion in Emergencies.
- **Strengthening national and branch level internal systems and capabilities** to assess the humanitarian needs and capacities of affected people (including those most at risk) puts National Societies in a strong position to scale-up their support beyond emergency response operations.
- **Monitoring population movements** in the context of both slow and sudden onset disasters can help identify potential humanitarian needs and ensure that people are not left out of a disaster response.
- **Community-led assessments** are at the core of developing anticipatory humanitarian action. Such assessments can inform understanding not only on risks that people face, but also their capacity to mitigate such risks – including through traditional and customary knowledge and practices.
- Humanitarian and development actors need to coordinate and promote the centrality of **durable solutions to displacement** in disaster preparedness and during the early stages of a response. This can help identify risks of prolonged, protracted, or secondary displacement early, as well as any possible regulatory or other barriers to durable solutions, especially in complex settings. Displacement – including related housing, land and property (HLP) issues – should however, not only be considered early, but also on an ongoing basis, including with a longer-term multi-year horizon and analysis.
- **Humanitarian diplomacy, and multi-stakeholder partnerships and coordination** – including with affected people – are vital in a complex disasters and crises to ensure clarity on roles and responsibility, but also to mobilise sufficient public and governmental support and resources for humanitarian operations and longer-term programmes.



AFGHAN RED CRESCENT SOCIETY: Assistance, Protection and Resilience for Communities Displaced by Drought

Background

Afghanistan is highly prone to intense and recurring natural hazards such as flooding, earthquakes, snow avalanches, landslides and droughts due to its geographical location and years of environmental degradation.⁸ Climate change is expected to significantly increase the risk of natural hazards across the country, especially due to its location at the western end of the Himalayas, which renders it susceptible to extremes of temperature and rainfall. As temperatures rise, snowmelt changes and rainfall will become more erratic, increasing the risk of floods and droughts.⁹ Climate change poses a severe threat to Afghanistan's natural resources, on which most Afghans depend for their livelihoods. Afghanistan is ranked as one of the countries most at risk from climate change, and one of the least prepared for climate shocks.¹⁰

Repeated hazards, disasters and decades of conflict have eroded many communities' resilience and capacity to cope and has pushed millions of people to the edge of survival.¹¹

Political instability, poverty, under-development, disasters and food insecurity continue to push significant numbers of people to move.¹² People who are forcibly displaced, both internally and across borders, are exposed to protection risks including insecure tenure, and secondary and multiple displacement. Conflict remains the main driver of displacement, however natural hazards (both slow- and sudden-onset) also contribute to, and trigger, population movements. In recent years, while returns from Pakistan have been low, returns from Iran have escalated to record numbers – with 670,000 people returning in 2018 and 430,000 people returning in 2019.¹³ Once in Afghanistan, and whether documented or not, returnees often become de-facto IDPs as conflict and lost community networks prevent return to places of origin, exposing them to further displacement. Declining remittances from Afghans working in Iran is also impacting the economy and contributing to needs across Afghanistan.¹⁴

8 IFRC Emergency Appeal: Afghanistan Drought and Flash Floods, March 2019.

9 ibid

10 OCHA, Afghanistan Humanitarian Needs Overview (2020).

11 IFRC, In Afghanistan Drought is Forcing Families to Move, 7 May 2019.

12 OCHA, Afghanistan Humanitarian Needs Overview (2020).

13 ibid

14 ibid



Afghan Red Crescent Society Support for Communities Displaced by Drought

In April 2018, after four years of below average rainfall, Afghanistan started to experience severe drought.¹⁵ By the end of the year, drought had affected more than two thirds of the country, devastating the agricultural sector and leaving four million people in need of life saving assistance.¹⁶

The drought – described as the worst in a lifetime – also led to the forced displacement of 371,000 people, primarily across the western provinces of Afghanistan.¹⁷ Most IDPs fled to vast and sprawling informal displacement sites in the city of Herat and Qala-e-Naw district.¹⁸ Immediate needs for IDPs included shelter, food, water, health care and protection.¹⁹

Many IDPs had borrowed money, to pay for transport, food and/or health services. As people struggled to find livelihoods, they increasingly resorted to negative coping mechanisms including sending children to work, beg or collect trash, or arranging child marriages.²⁰ Some IDPs also moved onwards across the border to Iran to find work.²¹

In March 2019, climatic conditions changed again, with heavy precipitation and snowfall across Afghanistan, resulting in severe flash flooding.²² In nine of the most affected provinces, the flooding damaged and destroyed housing and shelter, food, water, health care facilities, and disrupted or destroyed livelihoods.²³

The flooding also led to the displacement of rural communities and IDPs who fled from camps that were also affected by the flooding.²⁴ An estimated 42,000 people were displaced, mostly for a short period and limited to the immediate duration of the emergency.²⁵

To support communities affected by flash flooding, the Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS) provided emergency shelter and food for displaced individuals and families; deployed medical health teams and provided targeted multi-purpose cash-based support, including to help rebuild livelihoods. ARCS also held community awareness sessions on disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and the importance of early warning and early action.²⁶

15 IFRC, Emergency Appeal: Afghanistan Drought and Flash Floods, March 2019.

16 OCHA, Afghanistan Humanitarian Needs Overview (2019).

17 IDMC, Global Report on Internal Displacement, 2019.

18 OCHA, Afghanistan Humanitarian Needs Overview (2019).

19 ibid

20 Humanitarian Bulletin Afghanistan Issue 78, 1 July – 30 September 2018

21 ibid

22 IFRC, Emergency Appeal: Afghanistan Drought and Flash Floods, March 2019.

23 ibid

24 IFRC, Emergency Appeal: Afghanistan Drought and Flash Floods, March 2019.

25 OCHA, Afghanistan Humanitarian Needs Overview (2020).

26 IFRC, Operation Update Report No. 5 Afghanistan Drought and Flash Floods, 9 March 2020.

Recommendations and Lessons Learned

- Emergency support – including shelter, health, food, water and protection - is vital to safeguard the lives of IDPs in disaster settings. However, ultimately ARCS and other humanitarian and development actors must focus on longer-term resilience, and support IDPs to recover and rebuild their lives, and to attain durable solutions. In this crisis, it was reported that more than 70 percent of IDPs said they would not consider returning to their places of origin, regardless of any assistance offered.²⁷ Support for local integration (in the absence of return) is also further complicated due to housing, land and property (HLP) issues – including the fact that many IDPs are on private land, without secure tenure, and living with the threat and risk of eviction.
- In a critical displacement crisis, it is clear that some groups are disproportionately affected. In this case study, a lack of livelihood opportunities led to negative coping mechanisms that appear to have disproportionately affected children – both in the form of early marriage and child labour and begging. A protection, gender and inclusion (PGI)-informed approach and response must be at the forefront of any humanitarian and longer-term recovery support.
- The combination of disasters (flash floods and drought) and decades of protracted conflict has weakened the resilience of communities across Afghanistan. Humanitarian diplomacy with Afghan authorities and international organisations is vital to mobilize sufficient public and governmental support and resources for humanitarian operations and longer-term programmes.
- Humanitarian dialogue, partnerships and coordination are also vital in a complex, compound crisis such as this. As drought is a slow-onset phenomenon, it was unclear who had responsibility and mandate to respond - with some humanitarian agencies suggesting that the focus of the response should be on development in places of origin, and thereby fall to development agencies rather than humanitarians.²⁸ Livelihoods support remains the core activity in any resilience-building approach that sits at the core of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.
- Any short- or longer-term response targeting IDPs or returnees needs to consider and include host communities to prevent potential inter-communal tensions while IDP sites remain insecure areas in war-torn Afghanistan.
- Many rural communities, for whom life has become increasingly untenable, have proactively moved to urban centres, seeking better access to water, other basic services and income-generating opportunities.²⁹ It is important that these communities, although not forcibly displaced, are not left behind and are also included in humanitarian and development efforts to recover and rebuild lives and resilience.

27 IDMC, Global Report on Internal Displacement, 2019.

28 ibid

29 OCHA, Afghanistan Humanitarian Needs Overview (2019).

- Investment and focus on local actors with a priority given to the 34 provincial branches and response teams of the ARCS which have access to hard-to-reach and insecure areas, and acceptance from communities and parties in conflict. ARCS is currently reaching 3.6 million people through its health facilities – some of which are connected to IDP sites – and more than 300,000 people affected by disasters every year. By strengthening internal systems and capabilities (for example to analyse needs, PGI, community engagement and accountability), at national and local branch level, ARCS would be in strong position to scale-up its support with and for IDPs, beyond emergency and targeted interventions.



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BANGLADESH RED CRESCENT SOCIETY:



Disaster Preparedness for Displaced Communities in Cox's Bazar

Background:

Since 2017, in one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world, more than 850,000 displaced people continue to live in 34 extremely congested camps in Cox's Bazar District, Bangladesh. The refugees and displaced people fled from Rakhine State, Myanmar³⁰ and have sought shelter and protection in Cox's Bazar, in successive influxes in 1978, 1992, 2012 and 2016, with the largest and fastest influx occurring in August 2017.³¹ This is one of the most critical, and complex refugee and displacement emergencies experienced in the Asia Pacific region in decades.³²

In addition to the immense humanitarian needs associated with the crisis, refugees, displaced people and host communities in Cox's Bazar are also living with the constant threat from seasonal cyclones and monsoon rains, which lead to flooding and landslides. Bangladesh is among the countries most at risk of weather-related hazards in the Asia and Pacific region. The monsoon season runs from May to October and brings an average of 2.5 meters of rain each year, which presents a risk of loss of life and injuries due to landslides, flooding, and communicable diseases.³³

This risk from monsoons, cyclones and landslides is exacerbated by the inadequate, overcrowded shelters that refugees and displaced people live in – constructed mostly from plastic sheeting and bamboo – as well as the combination of steep slopes and low, flood-prone areas where the camps are situated. Forests are a source of firewood for cooking and have also been cleared to make space for the camps. This has also increased the likelihood of erosion, landslides and floods.³⁴ Should a disaster occur inside the camps, this may in turn create secondary displacement within the camps. The frequency and increasing strength of weather-related hazards are a serious concern for those living in these camps.

³⁰ The Government of Bangladesh refers to the Rohingya as “Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals”, while the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement uses the term ‘displaced person from Rakhine’ or ‘people from Rakhine’ in referring to the Rohingya in Bangladesh as an element in maintaining the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement’s operational access to provide vital humanitarian assistance to those in need on either side of the border. In this case study, references to ‘refugees’ refers to people who live in registered camps in Cox's Bazar.

³¹ 2020 Joint Response Plan: Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis.

³² IFRC, Preparing and reducing risks of disasters to displaced communities: Case Study Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, 22 June 2018.

³³ 2020 Joint Response Plan: Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis.

³⁴ IFRC, Preparing and reducing risks of disasters to displaced communities: Case Study Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, 22 June 2018.

Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) support for displaced communities:

Since the start of this latest crisis, disaster risk reduction initiatives have been limited for the refugees and displaced people living in the 34 camps, due to a scarcity of land and absence of strong structures for evacuation or relocation. At present, there are no cyclone-safe shelters designated for use by refugees and displaced people.³⁵

To ensure that refugees and displaced people in Cox's Bazar are included in national disaster preparedness efforts, BDRCS - in partnership with Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR), local authorities and other stakeholders assisting camp settlement management - led the extension of the national cyclone early warning system, Cyclone Preparedness Program (CPP), into the camp settlement. Since 2018, BDRCS has engaged, trained, equipped and mentored almost 3,400 volunteers currently living in the camps through a joint initiative with the American Red Cross and IFRC. Through the CPP, BDRCS has been able to establish a macro-level disaster management structure with refugees and displaced people at the forefront which continues to be functional and further strengthened during every cyclone season.

The CPP is a joint programme of the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR) of Government of Bangladesh and Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS). The CPP is a world-renowned disaster preparedness programme established in 1972, covering 13 coastal districts of Bangladesh through an Early Warning System (EWS) built on a central control room and early warning radio system that mobilizes over 55,000 volunteers to provide early warning messages to communities to take early action.³⁶

The expansion of the CPP to the 34 camps has been an impressive coordinated effort between a range of key stakeholders, namely the MoDMR, the Refugee Resettlement and Repatriation Commissioner's office (RRRC), Armed Forces Division and local government authorities. In addition, the expansion of the CPP to all 34 camps was possible as it was built as a joint effort for collective action by a broad range of humanitarian actors including Inter Sector Coordination Group (ISCG), UNHCR, IOM, UNDP and camp management agencies, to include the CPP within the overall humanitarian and camp coordination structures.³⁷ This has led to a standardised preparedness model across all camps, with contextualised and government-approved preparedness messaging.

Through the expansion of the CPP to the 34 camps refugees and displaced people have been included as temporary CPP Volunteers, and received training on community risk assessments, recognition of hazards, first aid and search and rescue.

As a result, a standardised cyclone contingency plan is now in place that provides for an immediate, life-saving response and the resumption of critical protection services within 72 hours following landfall.³⁸ This includes stockpiling of a minimum response package of basic shelter, water, hygiene and food supplies in strategic locations; maintaining a stand-by mobile response capacity; ensuring the availability of emergency warehousing; and keeping coordination mechanisms at the state of readiness needed to respond to a major emergency, which would overwhelm the ability of the established camp-level coordination structures to cope.³⁹

Recommendations and Lessons Learned

- As part of global efforts to improve disaster risk reduction and disaster preparedness initiatives, it is important to consider the needs and adjust approaches for the most vulnerable. The 860,000 refugees and displaced people in Cox's Bazar, and the communities that host them, are among the most at risk in the region and the world.⁴⁰ The success of the CPP is due in part to taking the foundation of an already strong national programme, and contextualising it for a particularly at-risk group, and a highly vulnerable context.
- It is vital for relevant actors and stakeholders to see communities not simply as vulnerable, but to recognise their strengths and capacities. The success of the CPP in Cox's Bazar is also – for a major part – due to the inclusion and contribution of refugee and displaced volunteers. Such volunteers are able to contribute to strong community-led assessments, and specific contextualised and appropriate disaster preparedness activities and initiatives. The simple step of having local volunteers goes a long way towards addressing barriers and challenges related to language, culture, trust and acceptance.⁴¹
- Acknowledging the cultural context of the displaced people by ensuring the Rohingya language is used across all training and communication messages through support from Translators without Borders (TwB) and BBC Media Action is note-worthy. A glossary of terms was developed which covers a range of sectors related to disaster risk, response and management to ensure that culturally appropriate and relevant terminology are used, to enhance the impact of the project amongst the displaced community.⁴²
- The CPP has taken dedicated steps to include not only the refugee and displaced communities, but also the host communities. This means that the CPP has contributed both to a 'whole-of-society' approach to disaster preparedness, as well as made a positive contribution to social cohesion and trust.

35 2020 Joint Response Plan: Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis.

36 IFRC, Preparing and reducing risks of disasters to displaced communities: Case Study Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, 22 June 2018.

37 ibid

38 ISCG, Cyclone 72-hour Response Plan, Cox's Bazar, June 2019.

39 2020 Joint Response Plan: Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis.

40 ibid

41 American Red Cross, Cyclone Amphan: In Bangladesh, Preparedness Paid Off, 29 May 2020.

42 BDRCS and American Red Cross, Expanding early warning into refugee settlements of Cox's Bazar, Good Practices in Global Compact for Refugees, Dec 2019.

- The Consortium approach of working to extend this initiative to all camps demonstrates the reach and impact that can be achieved together for increasing the resilience of displaced people and host populations. There is great potential for the sustainability and ownership of this initiative by the local and national government as it uses the existing national disaster management framework, mechanisms and institutions.⁴³



Corinne Ambler / IFRC



Ibrahim Molik / IFRC



BANGLADESH RED CRESCENT SOCIETY:

Supporting Communities Displaced by River-Bank Erosion in Shariatpur



Background:

Every year in Bangladesh, thousands of hectares of land collapse into the major rivers that run through the country, destroying homes, lands and livelihoods and pushing families away from their rural villages. This land erosion peaks during June to October – the annual monsoon season, which brings torrential rains and swells the rivers of Bangladesh.⁴⁴

During the first weeks of September 2018, heavy rain, rising water along the Padma river led to major river-bank collapse in Shariatpur district. More than 43,000 people were displaced after their homes and lands collapsed into the river. During the peak of the disaster, 70 to 100 homes per day were disappearing into the river.⁴⁵

Critical infrastructure was also lost – including a 50-bed Government health facility, pharmacies and private health clinics, two schools, religious institutes, three kilometres of roads and six bridges.⁴⁶

Due to the sudden collapse, many people were unable to evacuate their assets and lost everything including household items, agricultural resources and cash.⁴⁷

The disaster also led to lost livelihoods, as shops and markets collapsed into the river and loss of crops, seeds and agricultural land. Many families sold their stored grains to meet their daily expenses as well as the costs of removing their houses from the river.⁴⁸ Tube-wells and latrines were also destroyed, impacting access to safe water and sanitation.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ The New Humanitarian, Bangladesh's disappearing river lands, 29 August 2019.

⁴⁵ ACAPS, Naria, Shariatpur: Riverbank Erosion, 17 September 2018.

⁴⁶ ibid

⁴⁷ IFRC, Bangladesh: Displacement due to embankment collapse - Emergency Plan of Action Final Report DREF n° MDRBD021, 29 April 2019.

⁴⁸ ACAPS, Naria, Shariatpur: Riverbank Erosion, 17 September 2018.

⁴⁹ IFRC, Bangladesh: Displacement due to embankment collapse - Emergency Plan of Action Final Report DREF n° MDRBD021, 29 April 2019.

Many people who were displaced set up emergency shelter on their relative's land or rented their own shelters and land. Others were evacuated and went to 39 shelters supported by the authorities.⁵⁰ Those who rented land were reported to reduce their food intake in order to pay for rent. Livelihoods also remained unstable after the displacement – many people who had previously owned shops or farmed the land, turned to daily labour as their main source of income. The displaced people also put pressure on the common latrines in the communities they moved to.⁵¹

BDRCS support for communities displaced by river-bank erosion

In response to emergency needs resulting from the river-bank collapse, the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) assisted both displaced people and host communities with providing emergency shelter support, including tarpaulin and shelter toolkits. The BDRCS also provided multi-purpose cash grants of approximately USD 60 to nearly 3,000 families. Reports suggested that the top three cash spending areas were food, house reconstruction and education. BDRCS also provided dignity kits to women who were displaced and those in the host communities.⁵²

This support complemented the response from the Government of Bangladesh, which included the provision of food items, emergency shelter support, and cash.⁵³

BDRCS, with the support of IFRC, also undertook a detailed assessment on “Displacement and Housing, Land and Property (HLP)” to understand and guide initiatives to address longer-term needs connected with the loss of HLP, and any potential barriers to durable solutions.

The detailed assessment revealed that the Government of Bangladesh proposed to resettle between 200 and 300 families to three cluster villages (*guchograms*) located in char areas. *Char* lands are islands and bars formed by riverine and deltaic deposits in the large and dynamic rivers of Bangladesh. *Char* lands are often characterised by difficulty of access, minimal or no basic services, and frequent flooding and erosion. Multiple displacements are a common phenomenon of char land settlements due to the unstable nature of chars.⁵⁴ The assessment found that many families were not willing to move to char lands, because of the inherent difficulties of life on *chars*.

The assessment also noted that displaced people had the possibility to apply for khas land, state-owned land that may be distributed to landless families, defined those who have neither homestead nor agricultural land but are dependent on agriculture for their livelihood. Many displaced people were aware of this option; however, they viewed the application process as protracted, and ultimately that the land on offer was of low value, with limited access to essential services.⁵⁵

50 ibid

51 ibid

52 ibid

53 ibid

54 ACAPS, Naria, Shariatpur: Riverbank Erosion, 17 September 2018.

55 Displacement Solutions & Young Power in Social Action. Guidance Note: New Land for Climate Displaced Persons in Bangladesh, 2015.

Recommendations and Lessons Learned:

- Such contexts, where displacement is almost certain to become prolonged or protracted in the absence of clear durable solutions, require humanitarian and development actors to come together from the start, with the relevant authorities. Such actors need to coordinate and promote the centrality of durable solutions (whether local integration or resettlement) from an early stage. This will include an early identification of the displaced communities who will face the greatest barriers to durable solutions, alongside an assessment and understanding of the needs and perspectives of host communities.
- In such a displacement context, it would also be beneficial to establish a mechanism to understand and monitor the movement of displaced people. There was uncertainty on where people went in the wake of the disaster, with reports that many people left the immediate geographic area of the disaster including to Dhaka and Chittagong.⁵⁶ There is a risk that such people, who may need assistance to rebuild their lives and livelihoods, will be left behind.
- It is important to invest in disaster preparedness at the community level, especially as river-bank erosion is a seasonal and to an extent, forecastable. At present, there is no national forecast for erosion in Bangladesh.⁵⁷ To enhance preparedness at the community level, one simple measure has been to distribute maps in public areas, pinned with red and yellow flags as a form of early warning (red flag means a 70% probability and yellow flag means 50% probability of river erosion in that area). Another measure has been putting up posters informing people of the risk of river erosion. Such community-led initiatives are vital to inform communities in advance of river-bank collapse, and to inform preparedness initiatives, including evacuation of vital assets.
- Overall, the riverbank collapse in Shariatpur highlights both urgent, emergency needs of displaced and host communities, as well as the complexity of longer-term solutions. This is especially where, due the very nature of the hazard, land is lost, and return is not possible from the start. In order to support relocation or local integration as durable solutions in such contexts also requires an investment in understanding and promoting housing, land and property (HLP) solutions that empower people to rebuild their lives in safety and with dignity.
- To address the long-term issues of displacement, BDRCS together with humanitarian partners will work closely with Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR) through the Displacement Management Cluster established in July 2020, led by the Ministry and supported by International Organization of Migration (IOM). The cluster will provide a ‘whole-of-government’ approach to finding durable solutions for displaced people. BDRCS and IFRC in Bangladesh will work closely with the cluster to ensure data sharing, data collation and follow up. In the context of Bangladesh, this is particularly relevant given the projected rise in climate risk and impact-related displacement in the coming decade.

56 ACAPS, Naria, Shariatpur: Riverbank Erosion, 17 September 2018.

57 ibid



FIJI RED CROSS AND VANUATU RED CROSS:



Supporting communities displaced by Tropical Cyclones and compounded response challenges in the COVID-19 era

Background

On 3 April 2020, Category 5 Tropical Cyclone (TC) Harold hit the Solomon Islands, before passing through Vanuatu, Fiji and Tonga, causing significant damage to buildings and communities, destruction of crops, roads and contaminating water supplies.⁵⁸ In the worst affected provinces of Vanuatu, 90 percent of housing and large numbers of evacuation centres were destroyed.⁵⁹

TC Harold displaced an estimated 80,000 Ni-Vanuatu people, or over 27 percent of the country's population, as well as more than 10,000 people in Fiji.⁶⁰

TC Harold occurred just as the world was beginning to understand, prepare for and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. Fiji and Vanuatu had begun community outreach in the weeks ahead of the cyclone, to share preparedness (social distancing, hand washing and hygiene) messaging with communities. There was a very real concern about risks associated with a COVID-19 outbreak in cyclone-impacted communities. Therefore, a coordinated effort was made to do everything possible to avoid a COVID-19 in these countries and communities. At the time of the cyclone, no COVID-19 cases had been reported in Vanuatu, and there were 15-cases in Fiji.

Only four years earlier, in February 2016, one of the most severe cyclones ever recorded in the South Pacific swept through the Fiji Islands with winds of up to 325 kilometres per hour.⁶¹ Category 5 Tropical Cyclone (TC) Winston caused extensive damage, destruction and loss. Approximately 350,000 people, or 40 percent of the total population, were affected by the disaster.⁶² Total damage and losses were estimated at USD 1.42 billion, equivalent to 31 percent of Fiji's GDP. Water supply, power, health centres, schools and other public infrastructure were significantly damaged and more than 32,000 homes were damaged or destroyed.⁶³ At the height of the emergency, 54,000 people were displaced and living in 700 evacuation centres, many of which were schools.⁶⁴

58 IFRC DREF Operations Update Vanuatu Tropical Cyclone Harold, 21 April 2020.

59 ibid

60 IDMC, Tropical Cyclone Harold and COVID-19: A Double Blow to the Pacific Islands, April 2020.

61 IFRC Emergency Plan of Action Final Report, Fiji Tropical Cyclone Winston, 4 April 2018.

62 ibid

63 ibid

64 IOM, Evacuation Tracking and Monitoring, Fiji, 1 June 2016.

This case study explores the response to TC Winston in 2016 and compares it with the response to TC Harold in 2020, particularly considering the complexities of disaster response operations during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Fiji Red Cross Society support for displaced communities

TC Harold, 2020

In the days following the TC Harold, more than 1,000 National Society volunteers mobilised across Vanuatu, Fiji, Tonga and the Solomon Islands to offer physical and emotional support, including delivering essential items.⁶⁵

In Vanuatu, many displaced families took shelter in evacuation centres, including designated schools, churches or public buildings, however, most of these were also damaged and many had lost their roofs.⁶⁶ As a result, many displaced people in Vanuatu resorted to sleeping outside on concrete slabs.⁶⁷ Vanuatu Red Cross prioritised support for displaced families with destroyed houses who are staying in temporary sites, including through the provision of Family Kits containing kitchen sets, hygiene kits, mosquito nets, jerry cans, solar lamps and sleeping mats.⁶⁸

Although at the time of TC Harold, Vanuatu had yet to report a positive case of COVID-19, the humanitarian response was further complicated due to the impacts of the pandemic. Many international humanitarian workers were unable to enter Vanuatu, as authorities feared they could introduce the virus.⁶⁹ For humanitarian actors in Vanuatu, many affected areas were hard to access due to COVID-19 restrictions, including restrictions on travel between islands. Consequently, there was a heavy reliance on exiting staff and volunteers already present in the affected locations. For some local staff and volunteers, there were also concerns over contracting COVID-19 from imported relief items. This slowed the collection of assessment data, which needed to be transferred to Port Vila, the capital of Vanuatu, and triangulated by the national Government.

In Fiji, many people needed to stay in evacuation centres extended period, while at the same time schools were closed due to COVID-19 restrictions, putting additional stress on displaced people and the communities hosting them.

There were also big logistical challenges during the response as all airports in Vanuatu were closed to international commercial flights, and only limited supplies from New Zealand and Australia were permitted to be air-lifted by Government military aircraft. Sea freight took even longer, as it had to be fumigated, disinfected and often quarantined for many days.

65 IFRC, Pacific National Societies respond to Cyclone Harold in the time of COVID-19, 29 April 2020.
66 IFRC DREF Operations Update Vanuatu Tropical Cyclone Harold, 21 April 2020.
67 Refugees International, Issue Brief, A New Vulnerability: COVID-19 and Tropical Cyclone Harold Create the Perfect Storm in the Pacific, 3 June 2020.
68 IFRC DREF Operations Update Vanuatu Tropical Cyclone Harold, 21 April 2020.
69 IDMC, Tropical Cyclone Harold and COVID-19: A Double Blow to the Pacific Islands, April 2020.

TC Winston, 2016

Within one month of the cyclone, official government figures indicated that the majority of displaced people had returned home, and only 361 displaced people remained in 26 evacuation centres.⁷⁰ However, over the following months, a series of evacuation tracking and monitoring assessments recorded that more than 30,000 people remained displaced in other locations.⁷¹ Some had found temporary shelter with relatives and neighbours, with a small number living in community halls, religious facilities and schools.⁷² However, the vast majority of displaced people stayed within their home villages.⁷³

In the emergency phase of the TC Winston disaster, Fiji Red Cross Society provided more than 9,000 families with emergency relief items including blankets, jerry cans and plastic buckets, solar lanterns, hygiene kits, kitchen sets, baby kits, dignity kits for women, and clothing and bedding items produced locally by the National Society. Those who had been displaced, or whose homes had been damaged homes, were given tarpaulins, tents and shelter toolkits, as well as essential household items.

Many displaced people living in tents and poorly constructed temporary shelters were at risk of contracting communicable diseases such as typhoid, leptospirosis, dengue and diarrhoeal diseases due to disrupted water supplies, inadequate sanitation infrastructure, poor hygiene and overcrowding.^{74,75} To address these risks, Fiji Red Cross Society conducted community outreach activities to communicate about disease prevention and hygiene behaviour. Staff and volunteers visited households, hosted community fun night sessions and arranged for a puppeteer to put on shows for children, including many who had lost their homes and were attending school in temporary tents. The show incorporated messages about keeping safe and healthy.^{76,77}

During the recovery phase of the disaster, Fiji Red Cross focused on supporting communities to rebuild damaged and destroyed houses based on 'Build Back Safer' principles and techniques. The intention was to help communities rebuild and reinforce their homes to better withstand future cyclones. This was achieved through a focus on strong foundations, tying down structures from top to bottom, bracing for future storms, ensuring that shelter and housing joints were strong, ensuring a proper roof was in place and building on safe sites and ground.⁷⁸

Fiji Red Cross Society also supported 'Build Back Safer' initiatives through awareness and skills sessions, information, education and communication materials (translated into local dialects), alongside provision of hardware strengthening materials, safety gear and equipment and cash for labour.⁷⁹ To complement these initiatives, Fiji Red Cross

70 IOM, Evacuation Tracking and Monitoring, Fiji, 1 April 2016.
71 IOM, Fiji TC Winston Response, Evacuation Tracking and Monitoring Cycle 2 Report, June 2016, 15 July 2016.
72 ibid
73 IOM, Evacuation Tracking and Monitoring, Fiji, 1 April 2016.
74 IFRC Emergency Plan of Action Final Report, Fiji Tropical Cyclone Winston, 4 April 2018.
75 ibid
76 ibid
77 IFRC Elmo and Grover help Fijian children forget about Tropical Cyclone Winston, 26 April 2016.
78 IFRC Emergency Plan of Action Final Report, Fiji Tropical Cyclone Winston, 4 April 2018.
79 ibid

society constructed a series of model demonstration houses, that exemplified 'Build Back Safer' principles and techniques.⁸⁰

Recommendations and Lessons Learned

TC Winston

- Although many people were displaced during the emergency phase of TC Winston, the majority were able to return to their homes within a relatively short period of time. Those who remained displaced tended to stay in their home villages, often with neighbours or relatives, and were able to maintain their social and community support structures.⁸¹ The majority of displaced people were "naturally eager to go back home" and so return was the clear durable solution.⁸² Even in a relatively straightforward displacement context, it was still important to complement official figures on displaced people in evacuation centres, with a more comprehensive view of displacement across all communities. Such assessments revealed that many more people were displaced than initially presumed.
- During TC Winston response, especially the recovery phase, Fiji Red Cross focused on enhancing community resilience to future disasters – particularly through the Build Back Safer initiative. The National Society supported people to reinforce and strengthen their shelters, not only to better withstand future cyclones, but also to reduce the likelihood of future displacement. In the event of displacement, strengthened shelters would reduce the likelihood of severe damage or destruction of housing, and enable people to return home more quickly.

TC Harold and COVID-19

- COVID-19 has further complicated humanitarian response to disasters, and in many ways has posed fundamental challenges to standard practice of emergency relief. TC Harold presents many important lessons learned and reflections, however, one of the most critical is the increased need to invest in and emphasise localisation and the central and vital role of local humanitarian actors. It is equally clear that this investment cannot happen during a humanitarian response but needs to continue on a longer-term basis well before and well after disasters. In the context of COVID-19, local staff and volunteers also need to be equipped and trained to address humanitarian needs while also keeping safe from harm.
- Following TC Harold, risks of domestic and sexual violence were identified among displaced communities.⁸³ It is imperative for humanitarian actors to address these risks, including through reducing overcrowding in evacuation and displacement sites, and ensuring that vulnerable people are supported and can safely access services, for example through providing suitable lighting in evacuation centres, accessible latrines and water points.⁸⁴ This should be complemented with immediate awareness raising and services in prevention and response to Sexual and Gender

80 ibid

81 IOM, Evacuation Tracking and Monitoring, Fiji, 1 April 2016.

82 ibid

83 Pacific Humanitarian Team, Situation Report Tropical Cyclone Harold, 21 April 2020.

84 ibid

Based Violence, as outlined in the IFRC Minimum Standards for Protection, Gender and Inclusion in Emergencies.⁸⁵

- When displaced people are evacuated and sheltered in schools and learning facilities this causes widespread disruption to children's access to education. During TC Harold the need to provide tents for temporary learning spaces, school in a box kits and early childhood development (ECD) kits, alongside urgent infrastructure repair and rebuilding was identified.⁸⁶ Specific mental health and PSS initiatives for displaced children, including those with disrupted education, may also be needed.
- In Fiji, where there were active cases of COVID-19, there were challenges with social distancing in evacuation centres. There were challenges identified with contradictory messaging for overlapping responses – i.e. social distancing guidance not applying to evacuation centres. Assessments confirmed that some evacuation centres had overcrowding challenges, leading to concerns about the risk of pandemic spread.
- COVID-19 added additional layers of uncertainty, confusion, isolation etc. Although the impacts are only just being understood, COVID-19 changed the nature and duration of the displacement. Prolonged separation from family and friends, restrictions on movement due to lockdown, curfews, cancellations of domestic and international travel, and many more changes, created a highly stressed environment. Fiji Red Cross provided support to individuals and family members not allowed to return home at the border of areas under lockdown, as well as providing hygiene and dignity kits to families affected.
- Recovery was also hampered because of reduced economic activity due to pandemic precautions, as well as reduced international support entering the country because of closed borders. In Vanuatu, only relief items were able to enter the country and had to be quarantined for three to seven days prior to being cleared and distributed. No international personnel were able to deploy to Vanuatu to support the operation.
- As with elsewhere in the world, tourism came to an abrupt stop, and therefore any economic activity directly or indirectly involved with tourism was (and is) severely affected. TC Harold compounded this impact, by resulting in a significant loss of livelihood due to damage to households, infrastructure, loss of food and other crops, limited importation and movement of other income generating items/equipment etc.

85 <https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/document/minimum-standards-protection-gender-inclusion-emergencies/>

86 ibid



INDONESIAN RED CROSS (PMI):



Support for Displaced Communities following the 2018 Triple Disaster in Sulawesi

Background

On 28 September 2018, a series of strong earthquakes struck Central Sulawesi province in eastern Indonesia. The strongest was measured at 7.4 magnitude and 10km deep with the epicentre in Donggala Regency close to the provincial capital, Palu. The earthquake triggered a tsunami of up to three meters in some areas, striking Talise beach in Palu and Donggala.⁸⁷ The earthquakes, tsunami and resulting liquefaction and landslides caused significant damage and loss of life in affected areas. More than 4,300 people died, at least 100,000 homes were damaged or destroyed, and over 170,000 people were displaced.⁸⁸

A year later in September 2019, more than 50,000 people remained displaced, living in makeshift tents or in unofficial camp settlements.⁸⁹ By the middle of 2020, thousands are still displaced and continue to live in temporary shelters (called huntaras) or with relatives and the host community. Others have returned to live in houses that remain damaged.⁹⁰

For many who are still displaced, the main barrier to their return is liquefaction and the declaration by the Government of 'red zones' where return is prohibited. The Government continues to identify suitable land and, along with other partners, is supporting the construction of housing and the relocation of displaced people who cannot return to their original homes and lands.

In the immediate aftermath of the disaster, many people left Central Sulawesi. As a result, many of those who left were no longer recognized as affected by the disaster and faced restrictions on accessing the support that was available to those who remained in Sulawesi. As of mid-2020, it is unclear how many people have now returned to Central Sulawesi.

In 2020, COVID-19 now presents a new threat to the already vulnerable displaced people, with particular concern for those who are living in temporary shelters.⁹¹

87 IFRC Emergency Plan of Action 20-month report - Indonesia: Earthquakes and Tsunami - Sulawesi, 13 July 2020.

88 ibid

89 IFRC, Indonesia: 57,000 people homeless one year after Sulawesi earthquakes, tsunami and liquefaction (23 September 2019).

90 IFRC Emergency Plan of Action 20-month report - Indonesia: Earthquakes and Tsunami - Sulawesi, 13 July 2020.

91 "Indonesia's Palu endured a triple disaster, now coronavirus looms", Aljazeera (21 April 2020)

PMI Support for Displaced Communities

Following the triple disaster, the volunteers and staff of Palang Merah Indonesia (PMI) - the Indonesian Red Cross - mobilised and provided more than 100,000 people with emergency items including food, hygiene kits, mosquito nets and blankets, and more than 280,000 people with safe drinking water. Displaced people were a priority for PMI, including assisting those with badly damaged home through early recovery support. In Palu city, PMI provided support to displaced people living in temporary shelters (huntaras).

In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, PMI has also provided specific awareness-raising messaging to displaced communities, including those continuing to live in temporary shelters.

Following the emergency response phase, PMI has shifted its focus to supporting more resilient communities, including training people to build better, stronger homes; providing permanent safe water sources, rebuilding health centres, and helping affected people restore their incomes by providing livestock or boats.⁹²

Key recommendations and findings

- Taking displacement and durable solutions into consideration during the early stages of a response can support a more nuanced approach, especially in complex settings. This can also help identify risks of prolonged or protracted displacement early, as well as any possible regulatory or other barriers to durable solutions. Displacement should, however, not only be considered early, but also on an ongoing basis, including with a longer-term multi-year horizon and analysis.
- When supporting people displaced following a disaster, it is important for humanitarian and development actors to also consider the situation and needs for those who have left the affected area. In many cases, these individuals and families may have both immediate and longer-term humanitarian needs, and risk being excluded and left behind in the disaster response. In this disaster, there was some awareness of people leaving the area through Facebook geo-tracking analysis. Such innovative approaches can be more closely explored and analysed for informing future humanitarian responses to displacement.
- In taking a nuanced and longer-term perspective on displacement, effective Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) can and should play a central role. Affected communities – including both displaced and host communities – can play a central role in decision-making connected to recovery, including on durable solutions to displacement. During the emergency phase, CEA can also play a strong role in ensuring access to up-to-date and accurate information, which can ease anxiety, and dispel any rumours and speculation.

⁹² IFRC, Indonesia: 57,000 people homeless one year after Sulawesi earthquakes, tsunami and liquefaction (23 September 2019).







MONGOLIAN RED CROSS SOCIETY:

Anticipatory Humanitarian Action for Extreme Winter

Background

A *dzud* is a Mongolian term for a severe winter during which large number of livestock die, primarily due to starvation due to being unable to graze, in other cases directly from the cold. Nomadic herders in Mongolia are among the most affected by *dzud*, due to a high dependency on livestock for livelihoods and food security.⁹³

Many nomadic herders have left rural areas to move to settlements in urban areas – particularly in the capital, Ulaanbaatar. Whilst it is recognised that people move from rural to urban areas in Mongolia for a diverse range of often inter-connected reasons, including livelihoods, health, education and family and social connections,⁹⁴ it is also clear that environmental conditions, including *dzud* are contributing factors:

“Natural disasters impact rural-urban migration. There is drought in summer, dzud in winter. People lose their livestock and are tired of herding. People, who lose their livestock, cannot find any jobs in the countryside, so they move to the city and other settlements to make a living”.

- 37 years old, 11th khoroo, Bayanzurkh district, Ulaanbaatar⁹⁵

Once in urban areas, migrants may face difficulties in accessing housing, land, livelihoods and basic services. A very specific challenge relates to the requirement that individuals register their new address when moving within Mongolia. Such registration is essential to access social, welfare and other services including health care. It is reported that the number of internal migrants in Mongolia who have registered is low, including connected to a recent “migration ban” to the capital, Ulaanbaatar. This has led to many migrants facing critical barriers to accessing essential services.⁹⁶

93 IFRC, Mongolia: Severe winter - Emergency Plan of Action (EPoA) DREF Operation n° MDRMN011, 6 February 2020.

94 Ger Community Mapping Centre and IOM, Mongolia: Urban Migrant Vulnerability Assessment, August 2018.

95 IOM, Mongolia Internal Migration Study, 2018.

96 *ibid*



Mongolia Red Cross Society support for communities affected by Dzud

The Mongolian Red Cross Society (MRCS), the IFRC, the Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre and Mongolian authorities have partnered to use Forecast-based Financing (FbF) to reduce losses associated with *dzud*. FbF works by releasing funds for anticipatory humanitarian actions before extreme winter conditions arrive.⁹⁷ FbF is based on a specific combination of risk and impact analysis, and scientific forecast for extreme winter conditions.⁹⁸

Key humanitarian initiatives supported by FbF include distribution of cash and livestock nutrition kits to communities most at risk. The objective is that, with cash in hand, vulnerable herders will be able to meet their specific needs such as hay for their livestock or medicine for themselves. The livestock nutrition kit is designed to support herders to keep their livestock healthy during the winter as these products are scarce in rural areas.⁹⁹

Community participation is an essential component of developing the Early Action Protocols used in FbF. In the case of Mongolia, mid-level branches of the Mongolian Red Cross Society worked with the local authorities to conduct community-led risk assessments. Through interviews with potentially affected herders, the assessments were able to identify the primary impacts from previous *dzuds* and document how these impacts evolve over time.

MRCS is also helping herders build animal shelters, encourage stockpiling of hay and feed, as well as supporting the development of alternative income sources, such as the production of dairy and leather products.

Recommendations and Lessons Learned

- As with many slow-onset hazards, the decision to move in the context of *dzud* is motivated by a diverse range of inter-connected factors. It is not always clear whether such movement is voluntary, or forced, or indeed due to a combination of factors. It will be important to continue to explore such distinctions in the context of slow-onset hazards, and to continue to assess whether such distinctions impact the needs of affected communities or impact their ability to access necessary assistance and protection. In such a context, the overarching aim of the IFRC and National Societies is to reduce risk to both prevent conditions that force internal displacement,¹⁰⁰ and to enable migration to be a choice, and not a necessity.¹⁰¹
- Community-led assessments are at the core of developing anticipatory humanitarian actions under FbF. Such assessments can help support a focus on not only the vulnerability and risks that communities face, but also their capacity to address such risks – including traditional and customary knowledge and practices. In Mongolia, this focus on community-led assessments helped determine when early actions should be triggered, and what specific interventions would be most effective.

97 IFRC, Mongolia: Dzud - Early Action Protocol Summary, June 2019.

98 IFRC, Forecast based Financing for Vulnerable Herders in Mongolia, DRR in Action Case Study, 2018.

99 IFRC, Mongolia: Dzud - Early Action Protocol Summary, June 2019

100 International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, Policy on Internal Displacement, 2009.

101 IFRC Policy on Migration, 2009.



Mongolian Red Cross

- Since pastoral herders in Mongolia graze their animals across vast territories, the ability of Mongolia Red Cross branches to identify and collect information, connect with local authorities, as well as distribute assistance, was important to the design and implementation of anticipatory humanitarian actions. Recognizing the critical role of local branches, the Mongolian Red Cross Society trained over 300 volunteers across the country after the first activation of FbF to ensure that future volunteers were familiar with the operational plan and safety. This investment and focus on local actors and local responders is vital to support faster, more efficient and more relevant support to affected communities.

NEPAL RED CROSS SOCIETY:



Support for communities displaced after the 2015 Earthquake

Background

The earthquake that struck Nepal in April 2015 was the worst disaster to have struck the country in more than 80 years. The combined impact of the initial earthquake and its aftershocks killed nearly 9,000 people, injured an estimated 22,000 people and left millions more affected, as well as damaging critical infrastructure including health facilities, schools, roads and bridges.¹⁰²

The earthquake damaged or destroyed more than 712,000 houses and led to the displacement of more than 2.8 million people.¹⁰³

After the first earthquake in April 2015, many IDPs stayed in makeshift or temporary shelters near their damaged or destroyed homes, and within a week people began to return to their homes. However, following the second earthquake in May 2015, many people moved to open areas including fields, and others fled heavily affected rural areas towards displacement sites in the Kathmandu valley.¹⁰⁴

Most IDPs did not own the property they had lived in, creating challenges related to housing, land and property (HLP). Squatters, undocumented citizens and owners without formal title deeds risked exclusion from compensation policies. Women, undocumented residents and refugees also faced unequal access to inheritance and property rights. The threat of eviction from shelters was also a constant fear for many IDPs.¹⁰⁵

In the months following the earthquake, there were reports that IDPs in some displacement sites were not receiving adequate assistance, and protection concerns especially among women and children, were also highlighted.¹⁰⁶

By November 2015, nearly 1 million people remained in temporary shelters as the monsoon and winter seasons began.¹⁰⁷ Five years later, many people are still displaced and waiting for their homes to be rebuilt.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰² Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) conducted by the Government of Nepal's National Planning Commission in 2015.

¹⁰³ IDMC, Global Report on Internal Displacement, 2016.

¹⁰⁴ IDMC, Global Report on Internal Displacement, 2016.

¹⁰⁵ *ibid*

¹⁰⁶ *ibid*

¹⁰⁷ *ibid*

¹⁰⁸ IDMC, Global Report on Internal Displacement, 2020.



NRCS support for communities displaced by the 2015 Earthquake

The Red Cross and Red Crescent maintained five years of relief and recovery programmes, from April 2015 to October 2019. This included the collective efforts of the Nepal Red Cross Society, the IFRC, the ICRC and 30 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.¹⁰⁹

The emergency phase focused on saving lives through the distribution of essential relief items, providing emergency shelter solutions, emergency field-based hospitals, and ensuring continuous access to safe water and sanitation. The recovery phase focused on the provision of integrated services including the provision of durable shelter solutions, restoration of livelihoods, provision of safe water, sanitation and hygiene promotion, increased access to health services and rehabilitation of critical infrastructure including schools and hospitals.¹¹⁰

After five years, the collective efforts and resources of the Movement were transitioned to long-term community-based programmes and strengthening preparedness for future crises.¹¹¹ During the course of the response and recovery operations, the Movement undertook initiatives to support internally displaced people, including utilising a 'build back better and safer' approach and protection of those most at risk. Throughout the response, families who were displaced due to destroyed housing continued to be a priority category for humanitarian assistance from the Movement.¹¹²

Building Back Better and Safer

During the emergency response phase, the focus was on the provision of food, healthcare, safe access to water and sanitation and providing emergency shelter to affected communities. During this period, the Red Cross Red Crescent provided more than 130,000 families with emergency shelter assistance.¹¹³

During the recovery phase, the Red Cross Red Crescent interventions were guided by the principles of 'Build Back Better and safer' and a coherent and integrated approach spanning health, shelter, livelihoods, protection and risk reduction. During the recovery phase, the Nepal Red Cross provided shelter cash grants to more than 7,000 families. This was complemented with awareness training using the Participatory Approaches for Safer Shelter Awareness (PASSA), as well as with necessary technical assistance to promote a culture of resilient and durable housing and settlement in all target areas, including masonry training.¹¹⁴

109 IFRC, Emergency Appeal Final Report: Nepal Earthquake 2015, 30 September 2019.

110 IFRC, Nepal Earthquake: Federation Wide Final Report, 2020

111 *ibid*

112 IFRC, Emergency Appeal Final Report: Nepal Earthquake 2015, 30 September 2019

113 IFRC, Nepal Earthquake: Federation Wide Final Report, 2020

114 *ibid*

Protection

During the emergency response, Nepal Red Cross disseminated community messaging on child protection and SGBV by engaging local radio stations to host conversations with local experts. Public service announcements on violence prevention were widely shared with more than 36 community radio stations. The Nepal Red Cross also published and distributed around 60,000 information, education and communication (IEC) materials on sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), child protection and protection of people with disabilities. Referral mechanisms for SGBV cases as well as people with disabilities were put in place, ensuring the confidentiality of reported cases.¹¹⁵

Recommendations and Lessons Learned

- Most global disaster displacement is due to extreme weather events. However, the Nepal earthquake of 2015 is a sobering reminder of the large-scale displacement that can result from geophysical hazards. The Nepal earthquake also provides important lessons about the presumption that people will be displaced over short distances and return to and rebuild their homes promptly. Whilst this was initially true, the second earthquake and aftershocks contributed to prolonged displacement, and connected with barriers to return, including HLP issues, in some cases this resulted in protracted displacement.
- The Nepal earthquake is also an important reminder of the complex assistance and protection needs that IDPs may have following a disaster. Specific challenges related to child protection, SGBV and the risks of human trafficking arose in the aftermath of this disaster.¹¹⁶ In some cases, protection risks related to pre-existing discrimination, marginalisation and violence. Prior to the earthquake, Nepal had significantly high levels of violence against women and girls, with one in five women having experienced physical violence and more than one in ten women having experienced sexual violence at least once in their lifetime. However, it was also clear that risks of violence against women and children, including psychological and sexual violence can increase after disasters. Increased stress and feelings of powerlessness due to the loss of housing, land and property and livelihoods, the scarcity of basic provisions, post-traumatic stress and other factors can contribute to increased violence.
- One of the strengths of the approach of the Movement to the response and recovery phase was placing communities at the centre. This approach not only empowered affected communities but led to more efficient and appropriate support. In particular, initiatives to increase the participation of women in livelihoods interventions helped to create a more sustainable and balanced footing, increase and diversify household income, and helped to empower affected communities to be self-reliant.¹¹⁷

115 *ibid*

116 The New Humanitarian, preying on disaster: How human trafficking has spiked in quake-shattered Nepal, 26 April 2017.

117 Emergency Appeal Final Report, p. 28-29

- Minority groups, including sexual and gender minorities, were supported during and after the emergency phase, for example through targeted emergency relief, shelter and capacity strengthening initiatives. Displaced people with disabilities were specifically supported during and after the emergency phase, through provision of emergency relief, shelter, food, personal assistive devices, health and surgery support; as well as longer-term support to recover and rebuild livelihoods. A specific focus and targeted initiatives to reach those most at risk and marginalised, are vital as part of any response to displacement.



Palani Mohan / IFRC



Carl Whetham / IFRC



PHILIPPINE RED CROSS:

Adopting a Strategic Approach to Housing, Land and Property (HLP) for Displaced Communities

Background

Housing, land and property (HLP) rights are about having a home, free from the fear of forced eviction; a place that offers shelter, safety and the ability to secure a livelihood. Humanitarian actors are increasingly focusing on the importance of HLP rights in disaster contexts – including their vital role in supporting durable solutions.¹¹⁸

For people displaced by disasters, HLP issues can include tenure discrimination leading to inequitable assistance; loss of HLP documentation; access to land for shelter and livelihoods; access to natural resources, such as water; land and property conflicts; forced evictions; secondary occupation; land grabbing; restitution; and disinheritance, particularly of women and children.¹¹⁹

Although often complex, it has been highlighted that addressing HLP issues for displaced people in disaster settings is critical for the following reasons:

1. Saving Lives, preventing further displacement and human rights violations
2. Adapting humanitarian response to complex urban environments
3. Ensuring equal access to humanitarian assistance
4. Contributing towards durable solutions
5. Addressing loss of land (and inability to return) following a disaster
6. Protecting women, and supporting their recovery
7. Supporting localisation

The Philippines presents a complex HLP environment, including due to the large number of people living in informal settlements without formal legal rights to the land and housing which they occupy.¹²⁰

In the humanitarian response to a number of recent disasters in the Philippines, this HLP context – alongside other factors - has led to difficulties for humanitarian actors in ensuring that shelter and settlement support for displaced people is able to reach the most in need.

¹¹⁸ IFRC and Norwegian Refugee Council, The Importance of addressing Housing, Land and Property (HLP), Challenges in Humanitarian Response, 29 April 2016.

¹¹⁹ *ibid*

¹²⁰ See for example, Isidoro Malaque III, Katharine Bartsch & Peter Scriver (2018) Thriving in the slums: progressive development and empowerment of the urban poor to achieve secure tenure in the Philippines, *Architectural Science Review*, 61:5, 313-318, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/00038628.2018.1502154>



Following Super Typhoon Haiyan which hit the Philippines on 8 November 2013, the President of the Philippines recommended that a 40 metre 'No Build Zone' (NBZ) in all coastal areas affected by the Super Typhoon be enforced by local government units as a means of protecting against future storm surges. The government identified 205,000 families to be permanently relocated and stated that government assistance would not be provided to anyone in the NBZ. Following an inter-cluster initiative, the Humanitarian Country Team worked with the Philippine Government to allow provision of humanitarian assistance to those stuck in the NBZs, advocated that relocation should be considered as a measure of last resort, and that hazard mapping should be carried out to identify those at risk.

Additional HLP challenges during the humanitarian response to Typhoon Haiyan, as identified by the Philippine Red Cross, included difficulty in accessing documents that prove land tenure; lack of suitable or available land for shelter; tenure insecurity that either excludes affected people from receiving shelter assistance or exposes them to risk of eviction after receiving assistance; and inequitable provision of shelter assistance, based on tenure status, particularly in more remote and vulnerable areas.

The Approach of the Philippine Red Cross to HLP Issues

To address the complexity of HLP issues for displaced people following a disaster, the Philippine Red Cross has developed a draft Housing, Land and Property (HLP) Strategy for Shelter and Settlements Programming.

The primary objective of the Strategy is to overcome HLP-related regulatory barriers to inclusive shelter and settlements programming. The Strategy also aims to promote awareness on HLP rights in a disaster context and improve tenure security to lessen vulnerability of affected communities.

The Strategy highlights existing programming and approaches of the Philippine Red Cross (PRC) that integrate HLP considerations, including: the Participatory and Safe Shelter Awareness (PASSA) programme; the PRC flexible approach to shelter and settlements assistance, including that partial shelter assistance is provided to those that do not have or cannot prove full ownership of damaged property; and PRC practice of having written agreements on terms of use, including a *kasunduan* - a written agreement that provides security of tenure through an agreement between the affected household and the landowner.

The Strategy then proposes a series of internal and external actions that the Philippine Red Cross can take to address HLP concerns and improve the HLP rights of affected communities.

Internal actions include:

During the Preparedness Phase:

- HLP mapping and integrating land tenure considerations in shelter assistance matching

- Collection of land tenure baseline data through a Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA) and other data collection activities
- Mapping of HLP stakeholders
- Capacity-building of PRC staff and volunteers on HLP
- HLP awareness campaign

During Response and Early Recovery Phases:

- Tenure profiling during response and early recovery
- Due diligence
- Integrating HLP concerns in stakeholder consultations
- Outsource legal assistance and provide referral information for land tenure concerns

External Actions include:

- Advocacy on HLP rights
- Coordination with the shelter and protection clusters on HLP concerns

Recommendations and Lessons Learned

- It is well recognised that HLP issues need to be effectively addressed by humanitarian actors. However, these efforts cannot begin during the response phase - investment and preparedness for humanitarian action that takes HLP issues into account needs to occur before and after disasters strike.
- The approach of the Philippine Red Cross provides a strong rationale for adopting a strategic approach to the complex array of HLP issues that arise for disaster-affected communities, including those who are displaced. The approach also recognises the complexity and range of partnerships that need to be achieved in order to address HLP issues, including based on strong and genuine consultation with affected people.
- The development of the HLP Strategy for the Philippine Red Cross also demonstrates the importance of localisation and strong local actors, and places at its heart the continued investment and strengthening of local capacity, including staff and volunteers of the Philippine Red Cross.



The Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

Humanity The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavours, in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all peoples.

Impartiality It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

Neutrality In order to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

Independence The Movement is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian

services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.

Voluntary service It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

Unity There can be only one Red Cross or Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.

Universality The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in which all societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.

