

Mid-Term Evaluation
of the project
**“Strengthening
Disaster Risk Reduction capacities and mechanisms
in the province of Capiz, the Philippines”**
February 2018



Contracting Organisation

German Red Cross
National Headquarters
Carstennstrasse 58
12205 Berlin

Evaluator

Friederike Leona Keyl
Consultant for International Cooperation
Heußweg 111
20255 Hamburg

Contents

List of Abbreviations.....	3
Executive Summary	4
1. INTRODUCTION.....	7
1.1. Background.....	7
1.2. The Evaluand	7
1.3. Implementing Organisation.....	7
2. OBJECTIVE	8
3. METHODOLOGY	8
3.1. Evaluation Design	8
3.2. Data collection tools.....	9
3.3. Research Questions	10
3.4. Limits of the Evaluation.....	11
4. RESULTS.....	11
4.1. Context Analysis	11
4.2. Relevance	12
4.3. Effectiveness.....	13
4.3.1. Goal achievement.....	13
4.3.2. Challenges, Solutions and Best Practices	15
4.3.3. Management Processes	21
4.4. Coherence	24
5. CONCLUSION.....	27
6. RECOMMENDATIONS	29
Annexes.....	31

Imprint

This evaluation has been conducted by an external evaluator on behalf of German Red Cross. The final report reflects exclusively the opinion and interpretation of the evaluator.

Friederike Leona Keyl. February 2018

List of Abbreviations

BDRRMC	Barangay Disaster Risk Reduction Management Committee
CBDRR	Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction
CBDRRM	Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction and Management
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
CDO	Community Development Organiser
CPC	Chapter Project Coordinator
DepEd	Department of Education
DM	Disaster Management
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
DRRM	Disaster Risk Reduction and Management
DRRMC	Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council
DSWD	Department of Social Welfare and Development
EWS	Early Warning System
FbF	Forecast based Financing
FFO	Federal Foreign Office
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GRC	German Red Cross
LGU	Local Government Unit
MAO	Municipal Agriculturist Office
MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NHQ	National Head Quarter
NPC	National Project Coordinator
PDAO	Persons with Disability Affairs Office
PLWD	People Living With Disability
(P/M) DRRMO	(Provincial / Municipal) Disaster Risk Reduction Management Office
PNS	Partner National Society
PO	Project Officer
PRC	Philippine Red Cross
SRI	Organic System on Rice Intensification
VCA	Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment

Executive Summary

The Evaluand

The Philippine Red Cross (PRC) with support from German Red Cross (GRC) is currently implementing the project “Strengthening Disaster Risk Reduction capacities and mechanisms in the province of Capiz, the Philippines”. The action is funded by the German Federal Foreign Office (FFO) and runs from August 2016 until December 2018. Whereas the overall objective of the project is to contribute to improved DRR capacities of vulnerable communities and local government authorities in the Philippines, its specific goal consists in the strengthening of DRR capacities of communities, the PRC Chapter, as well as LGUs in the Province of Capiz, while improving their understanding of local DRRM strategies and related measures. As a result, the province will ultimately be able to better prepare for disasters, to mitigate their effects and to recover faster.

The project seeks to support the implementation of the “Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010” (RA 10121) which became effective in the country in 2010.

Evaluation Goal and Methodology

The external mid-term evaluation (MTE) serves two principal objectives: a) to measure progress and discuss the likelihood of achieving the defined results, and b) to systemize learning effects, highlight best practices and give practical recommendations. Due to its formative character, the findings and recommendations of the study will provide the PRC/GRC Project Management with an information base for decision making with regards to the remaining project implementation, but also for potential future DRRM projects. Last but not least, the evaluation also provides accountability towards the donor (FFO) with regards to the progress of the project.

As for the evaluation’s methodology, the project’s progress was assessed along the OECD/DAC criteria of Relevance, Effectiveness and Coherence. Research questions have been elaborated accordingly, while covering the different phases of the project’s life cycle. By analysing events and developments during planning and implementation stages, while also casting a look at the after-funding phase, challenges have been detected and options for correction identified.

Information has been collected mainly by means of qualitative methods, such as key informant interviews, focus group discussions (FGD), workshops and team meetings, observation during field visits, as well as secondary data analysis.

Key Findings and Lessons Learned

Relevance:

The great majority of the project activities was found to be relevant and in line with the findings of the initial needs assessment and the baseline study. While the capacities of certain stakeholders, such as the provincial and municipal DRRM Offices were found to be relatively high, the project activities are deemed particularly relevant on community and school level, where awareness and measures to prepare for disasters are still insufficiently mainstreamed.

Effectiveness:

The PRC/GRC project staff at field level was found to be a well-qualified and dedicated team. Moreover, coordination among, and commitment of all actors within the project is very engaged. This reflects the good understanding that all stakeholders share regarding the project’s objective and importance, and has led to the creation of valuable synergies.

Although most of the defined interim indicator target values could be achieved at the time of this mid-term evaluation, the majority of the project activities was found to be delayed. This is due to several challenges caused by a very ambitious project design, characterised by numerous activities and thematic sectors, a high number of target barangays and schools, far-stretched and isolated

target communities and schools, as well as a small number of project staff and volunteers, and limited options for transport. Adverse weather events that repeatedly hit the target area during implementation caused additional delays of the activities. Because of the delays, as well as a very positive exchange rate, money had to be returned to the donor in 2017.

In this regard, the delay of the VCA (Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment) implementation is of particular concern, as the outcomes of this exercise constitute the basis for many subsequent activities. Whereas overall community participation in the project activities was reported to be high, attendance during VCAs is rather low. The reason is that the project does not provide allowances for transport and food for this activity, causing people to prioritize their field work in order to earn an income. To cope with the limited time left to conduct the VCAs, the project team decided to shorten the length of the VCAs. While this was found problematic by some of the PRC/GRC staff, as it might compromise the thoroughness of the DRRM process, others stressed the importance of a good representation of participants throughout the entire process, in order to ensure the quality of the project.

Although PRC/GRC staff coordinated all activities closely with all related LGUs from the beginning, the alignment of project activities with existing government plans and schedules required further re-scheduling during implementation, which led to delays.

Aspects of sustainability have only been considered during the implementing stage of the project as opposed to the planning stage. However, despite this omission, the facilitation of several multi-stakeholder workshops to discuss the project's exit strategy, has led to commitments from LGUs to continue certain activities and related allocations in the annual budgets. Protocols of the workshops have not always been shared, which is important to further consolidate the commitments made by the LGUs.

Last but not least, a reporting and monitoring system focussed on quantities and activities, as well as time pressure to accomplish the numerous activities in a relatively short period of time, detain the project team from reflecting progress towards the project's ultimate goals and desired impact.

Coherence:

All project activities were found to be coherent and in line with the relevant strategy papers of the PRC and related Government departments, the main documents being the Republic Act on DRRM No. 10121, as well as DepEd Orders and policies of the Department of Agriculture (DA). This has been achieved through continuous coordination, information sharing and cooperation between all involved stakeholders before and during project implementation.

Main Recommendations

Based on these findings, two sets of recommendations have been elaborated; one referring to the remaining implementing time of the DRR project in Capiz, and one for future DRRM projects of a similar design.

Recommendations for the DRR project in Capiz:

Due to the high number of activities still to be implemented until December 2018, the evaluation recommends for the project team to carefully assess the possibility to outsource the execution of certain activities to consultants or other service providers. Alternatively, a no-cost extension could be requested from the donor, in order to accomplish all activities within a realistic timeframe, while ensuring the project's quality.

Moreover, more volunteers from the target communities should be trained and mobilised to support the project activities, especially the VCA implementation. At the same time, training, orientation and guidance of local staff and volunteers should be enhanced wherever possible.

As the implementation of the VCA process is of highest priority, and bearing in mind the identified problems related to participation, the evaluation recommends to assess if savings can be allocated in the budget to support beneficiaries with allowances for food and transport.

To further increase the sustainability of the project, outcomes and protocols of multi-stakeholder meetings and other important events should always be shared with all participants.

Recommendations for potential future DRRM projects:

For future project designs, the evaluation recommends to better align the number of activities, addressed sectors, target communities and schools with the required resources (e.g. staff, transportation) to ensure smooth implementation and increase the overall quality of the project. This is particularly important in the context of longer-term development projects, as constant awareness raising, counselling and the facilitation of trainings are time and staff consuming, and activities need to be scheduled according to availability of stakeholders and existing government plans and schedules.

At the same time, adequate mitigation measures and enough contingency days should be scheduled for delays caused by adverse weather events, such as heavy rains, floods and typhoons, as such events have long become a given certainty in disaster-prone areas rather than a likely risk.

Sufficient time should also be allocated to accommodate trainings and workshops as per quality recommendation. This applies particularly for the VCA process, but also for agricultural trainings, as shortening of activities might compromise the thoroughness of the exercise and thus the quality of the outcome. At the same time, possible contributions (e.g. transport, food) should be duly discussed with the communities during the planning stage and additionally support budgeted within the project, as participation highly depends on such provisions.

Aspects of sustainability should already be considered during the planning stage of the project proposal, as the sustainability of a project is already influenced during the initial stage of elaborating the project idea.

Last but not least, the evaluation recommends a shift in focus from output and activity to outcome and impact level within the general PRC project management, in order to promote monitoring and reflection on (un)intended changes in the communities, while considering internal and external factors of influence. Workshops (e.g. on impact models and indicators as opposed to linear logframe approaches, rigorous impact monitoring and evaluation, etc.) facilitated by external consultants are recommended in this regard.