

Post-Disaster Land Use and Spatial Development Challenges: The Case of Itogon, Benguet in Northern Philippines



**Presentation for the
4th Spatial Planning Platform**
February 09, 2022

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SUMMARY OF PRESENTATION

A. Background and Introduction

B. PDRR in the Philippine DRRM System

C. Spatial Planning and Land-Use in Post-Disaster Context

D. Conclusion and Recommendations

INTRODUCTION

- The Philippines is **highly vulnerable** to the impacts of natural hazards.
 - ✓ *Recovering from disasters is a challenging process.*
- In 2018, the Cordillera Administrative Region in Northern Luzon suffered the brunt of **Typhoon Mangkhut (Local Name: Ompong)**.
 - ✓ Spatial Planning and Land Use in Post-Disaster Context: No-Build Zones (NBZs) and planned the relocation of communities to move people away from hazards.
 - *Relocation projects themselves are highly criticized (Walch, 2017).*
 - *PDRR processes itself may exacerbate various existing pre-disaster risks (Pyles, 2007 & Iuchi, 2016).*
 - ✓ If applied the right way, these initiatives can support the development of safer, more resilient communities

BACKGROUND

INTRODUCTION

The article *explores the application of PDRR policies and experiences of the communities in the region affected by recent disaster particularly in the context of a post-disaster spatial land use*. The article considers the following questions:

1. What are the existing PDRR policy framework in the Philippines related to land-use, spatial development, and relocation?
2. How the implementation of the NBZ policy and relocation, as *post-disaster spatial land use policy*, affected the communities in Itogon, Benguet?

The article then proposes an *empirically-informed logic model to guide decision-makers and policymakers in approaching relocation as a post-disaster rehabilitation and recovery strategy*.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

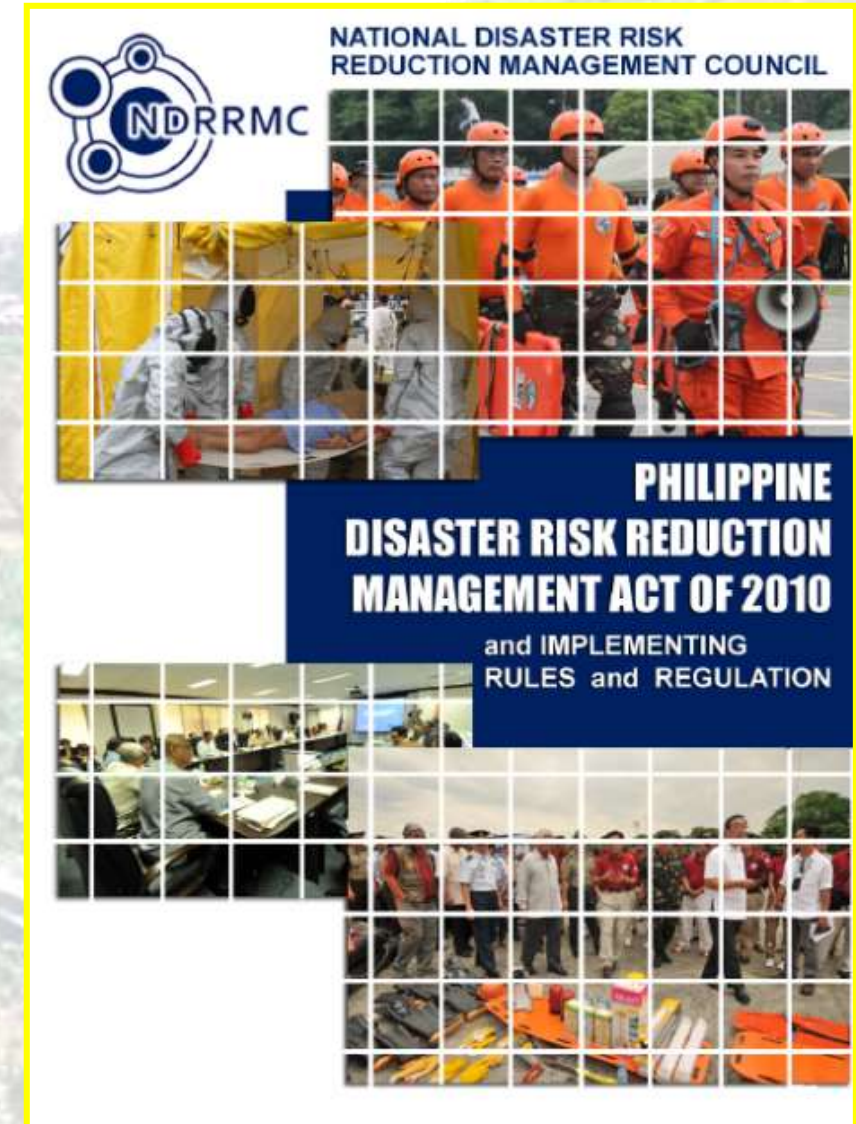
PDRR IN THE PHILIPPINE DRRM SYSTEM

Then...

- Executive Order No. 335 (Civilian Emergency Administration – Civilian population protection)
- Republic Act 1190 known as the Civil Defense Act of 1954 (WWII, Nuclear arms race)
- Presidential Decree 1566 dated June 11, 1978 (NDCC)

Now...

- Republic Act 10121 signed into law on May 2020.
- NDRRMC and LDRRMCs
- Institutionalization of NDRRMF and NDRRMP
- PDRR as one of the 4 DRRM Thematic Areas.



PDRR IN THE PHILIPPINE DRRM SYSTEM

Disaster Prevention and Mitigation

Avoid hazards and mitigate their potential impacts

Disaster Preparedness

Establish and strengthen capacities

Safer, adaptive and disaster resilient Filipino communities towards sustainable development

Disaster Response

Provide life preservation and basic subsistence needs

Disaster Rehabilitation and Recovery

Restore and improve facilities and living conditions and capacities

- PDRR in the National DRRM Plan
- NEDA as the Vice Chairperson for PDRR.

SENDAI FRAMEWORK

FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION 2015-2030

Priority for Action IV: [...] and to "Build Back Better" in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction (SFDRR, 2015).



PDRR IN THE PHILIPPINE DRRM SYSTEM

- In 2013 – Zamboanga Siege, Bohol Earthquake and Typhoon Yolanda (Villacin, 2017, Valenciano, 2017 & Arroyo, et. al, 2019).
 - ✓ *Funding gaps, ad hoc management, protracted period of implementing projects, no standard templates, etc.*
 - ✓ *Reproduction of “pre-disaster vulnerability”*
 - ✓ *National Rehabilitation and Recovery Guide (NDRRMC, 2019)*
- The country still lags behind in the aspect of post-disaster reconstruction (PIDS, 2017)



Photos: UNDP, Climate.org and The Atlantic

THE CASE OF ITOGON IN NORTHERN PHILIPPINES

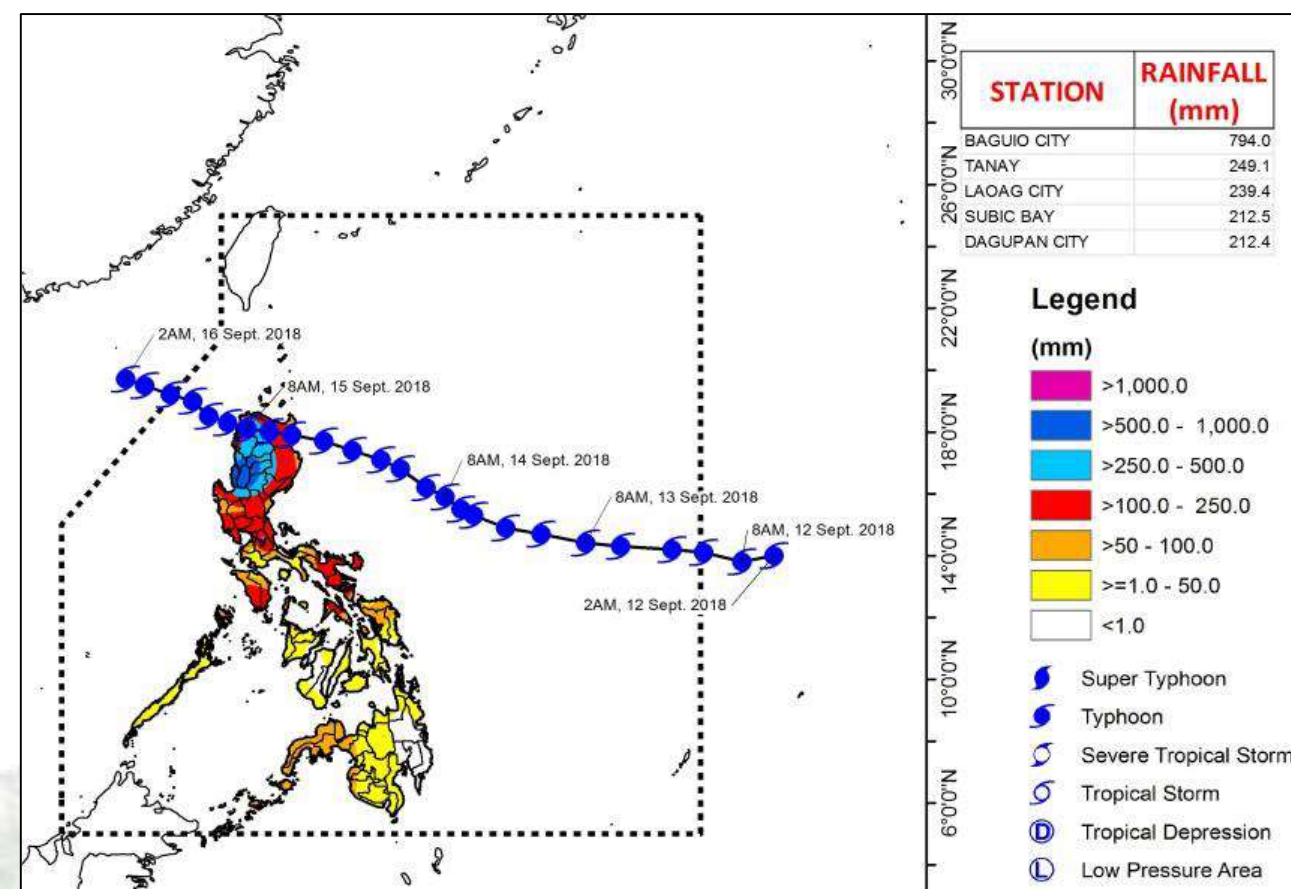
- Itogon is one of the thirteen (13) municipalities of Benguet [...] **generally mountainous with deep valleys and steep slopes.**
- The main source of livelihood is the **mining industry** [...] home to both large scale and small scale mining activities.
- Has one of the **highest multiethnic constituencies** in the said province largely due to the continuous labor demand (Albano, 2014).



Photos: PhilStar.com and PIA-CAR

ITOGON, BENGUET AS AN ILLUSTRATIVE CASE

THE CASE OF ITOGON IN NORTHERN PHILIPPINES



Rainfall Distribution during the passage of Typhoon Mangkhut (Local Name: Ompong) from 12-15 September 2018 (Source: PAGASA Baguio Synoptic Station)

- **Overlapping crises** (2 tropical cyclones in September 2018 at effects of Southwest Monsoon or Habagat)
 - 794 mm (4-day rainfall data compared to 570.00 mm monthly average rainfall for September)
- “Our forefathers were able to adapt to its [Itogon] topographic conditions. Their resiliency, however, varies at the present setting after so much environmental degradation and development took place. [...] Itogon is worth saving for it is the only land God has given us.” (Itogon MDRRMC, 2018).

TYPHOON MANGHKUT (LOCAL NAME: OMPONG)

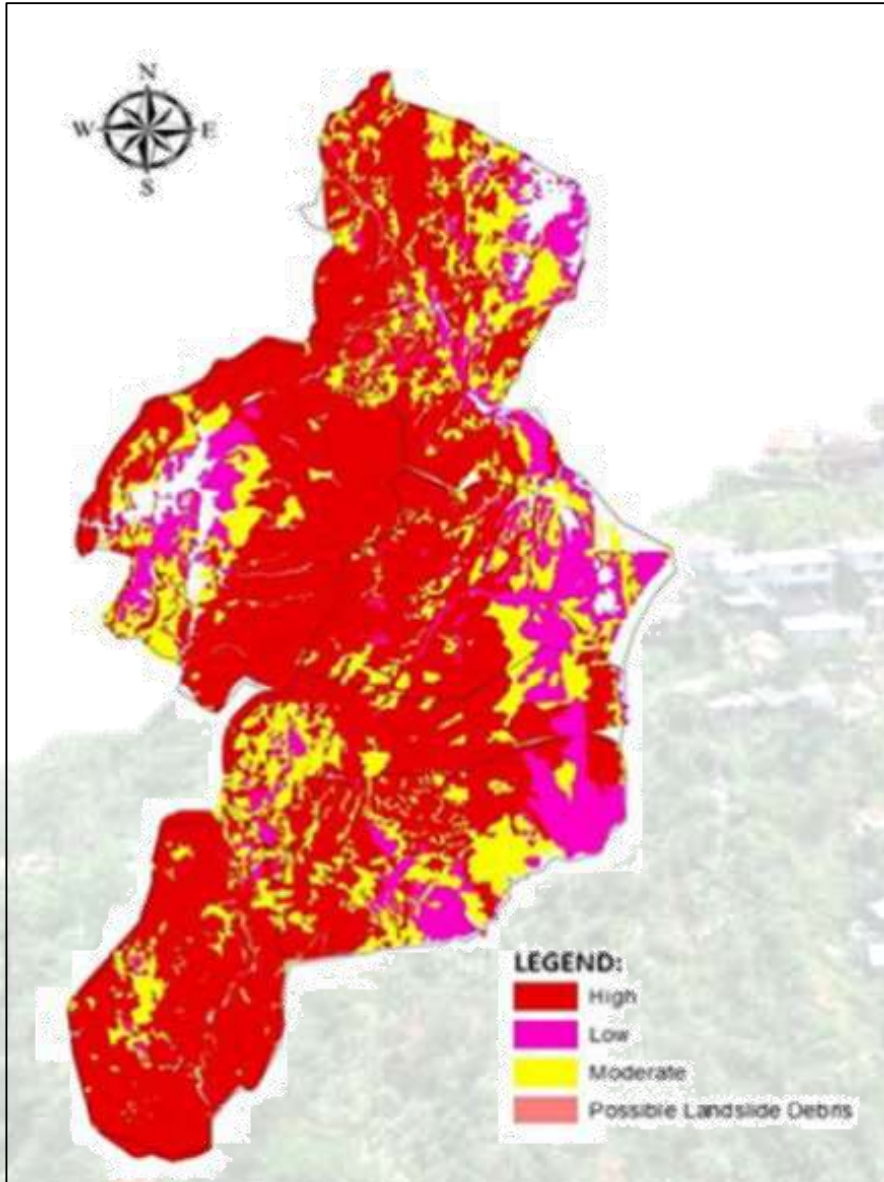
THE CASE OF ITOGON, BENGUET



Photos: Sunstar Baguio (2018) and ABS-CBN News (2018)

TYPHOON MANGHKUT (LOCAL NAME: OMPONG)

THE CASE OF ITOGON IN NORTHERN PHILIPPINES



- Disasters with major physical impact [...] a new land use framework to consider changes in the topography and the land use of the area after a disaster (Saunders, 2016).
 - ✓ Tacloban City (TY Yolanda 2013); Villavisciosa, Abra (TY Ineng, 2016)
- This lay down the urgent need to review the progress of the PDRR programs [...] revisit how these factors are considered in the implementation and practice.

Photos: PhilStar.com and PIA-CAR

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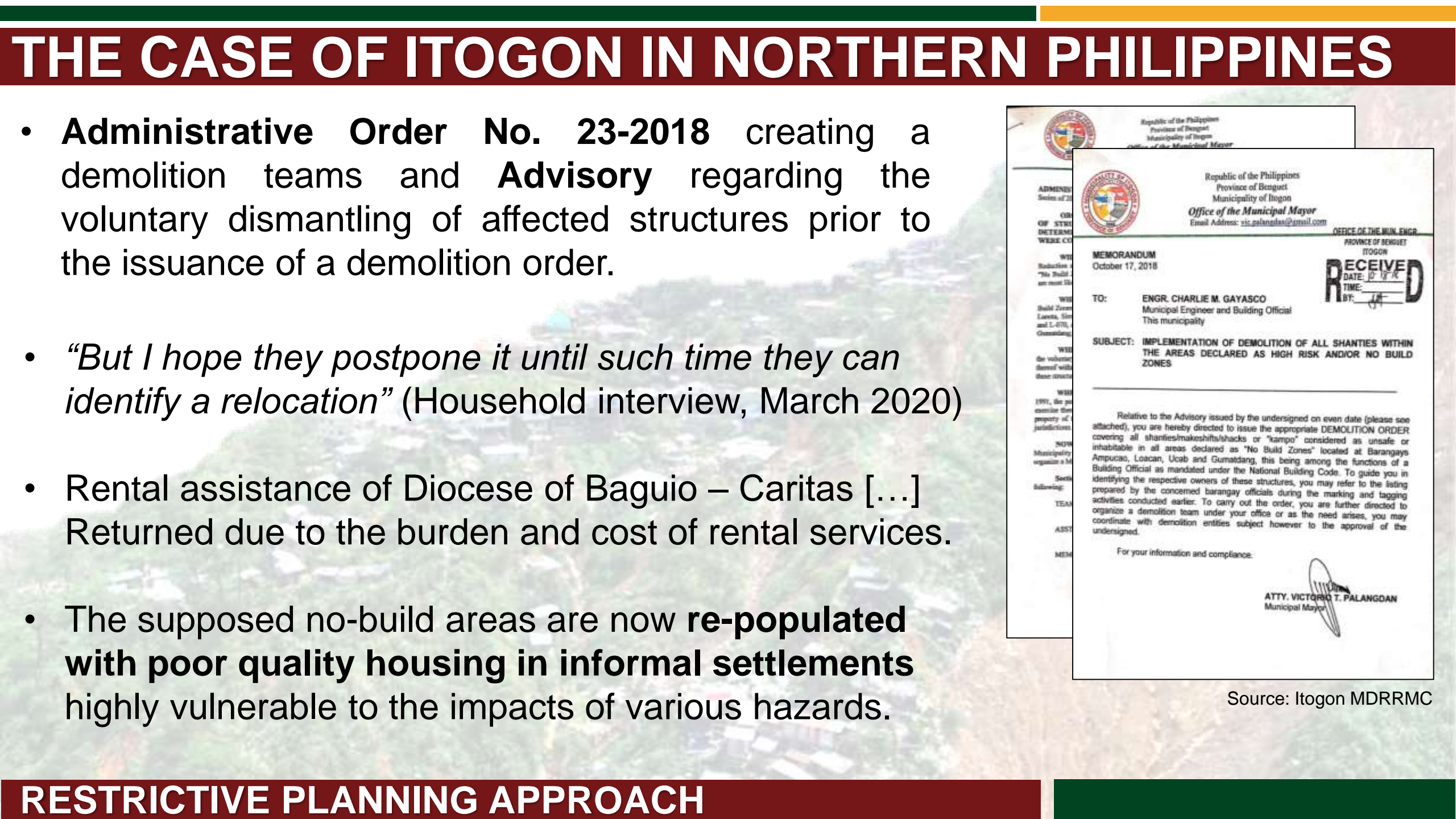


Photos: MGB-CAR, 2018

- MGB led geo-hazard assessments in the affected areas in October, 2018.
 - ✓ *No-Build Zones and immediate relocation of communities (CLUP Guidebook, 2013 & UNISDR, 2015)*
- Disasters with major physical impact [...] a new land use framework to consider changes in the topography and the land use of the area after a disaster (Saunders, 2016).
 - ✓ *Tacloban City (TY Yolanda 2013); Villavisciosa, Abra (TY Ineng, 2016)*
- This lay down the urgent need to review the progress of the PDRR programs [...] revisit how these factors are considered in the implementation and practice.

THE CASE OF ITOGON IN NORTHERN PHILIPPINES

- **Administrative Order No. 23-2018** creating a demolition teams and **Advisory** regarding the voluntary dismantling of affected structures prior to the issuance of a demolition order.
- *“But I hope they postpone it until such time they can identify a relocation”* (Household interview, March 2020)
- Rental assistance of Diocese of Baguio – Caritas [...] Returned due to the burden and cost of rental services.
- The supposed no-build areas are now **re-populated with poor quality housing in informal settlements** highly vulnerable to the impacts of various hazards.



Republic of the Philippines
Province of Benguet
Municipality of Itogon
Office of the Municipal Mayor

ADMEMO
Series of 2018

OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL ENGINEER
ITOGON

MEMORANDUM
October 17, 2018

TO: ENGR. CHARLIE M. GAYASCO
Municipal Engineer and Building Official
This Municipality

SUBJECT: IMPLEMENTATION OF DEMOLITION OF ALL SHANTIES WITHIN THE AREAS DECLARED AS HIGH RISK AND/OR NO BUILD ZONES

Relative to the Advisory issued by the undersigned on even date (please see attached), you are hereby directed to issue the appropriate DEMOLITION ORDER covering all shanties/makeshifts/shacks or "kampos" considered as unsafe or inhabitable in all areas declared as "No Build Zones" located at Barangays Ampucao, Loacan, Ucab and Gumatdag, this being among the functions of a Building Official as mandated under the National Building Code. To guide you in identifying the respective owners of these structures, you may refer to the listing prepared by the concerned barangay officials during the marking and tagging activities conducted earlier. To carry out the order, you are further directed to organize a demolition team under your office or as the need arises, you may coordinate with demolition entities subject however to the approval of the undersigned.

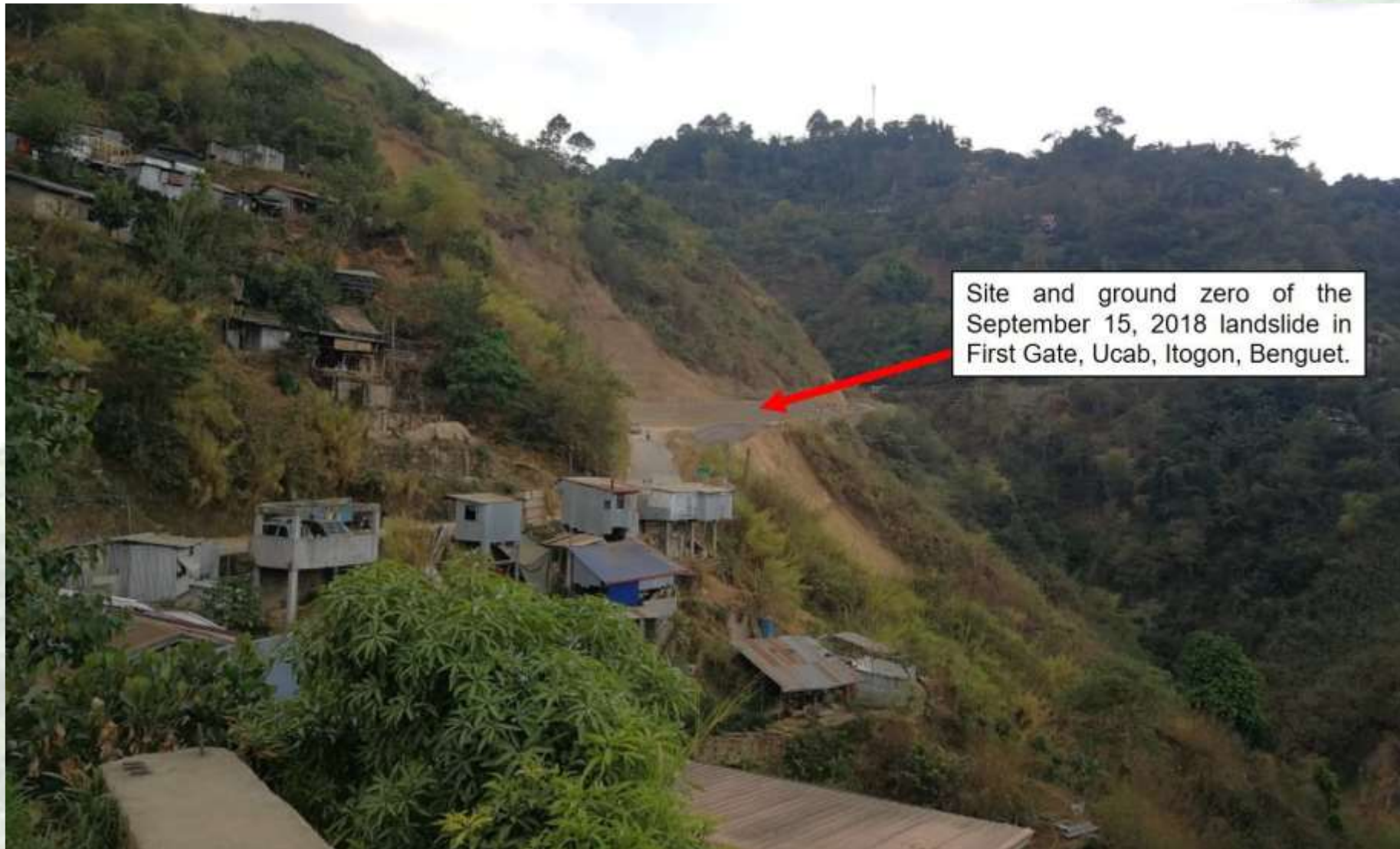
For your information and compliance.

ATTY. VICTORIO T. PALANGDAN
Municipal Mayor

RECEIVED
DATE: 10/18/18
TIME: 1:15 PM
BY: [Signature]

Source: Itogon MDRRMC

THE CASE OF ITOGON IN NORTHERN PHILIPPINES



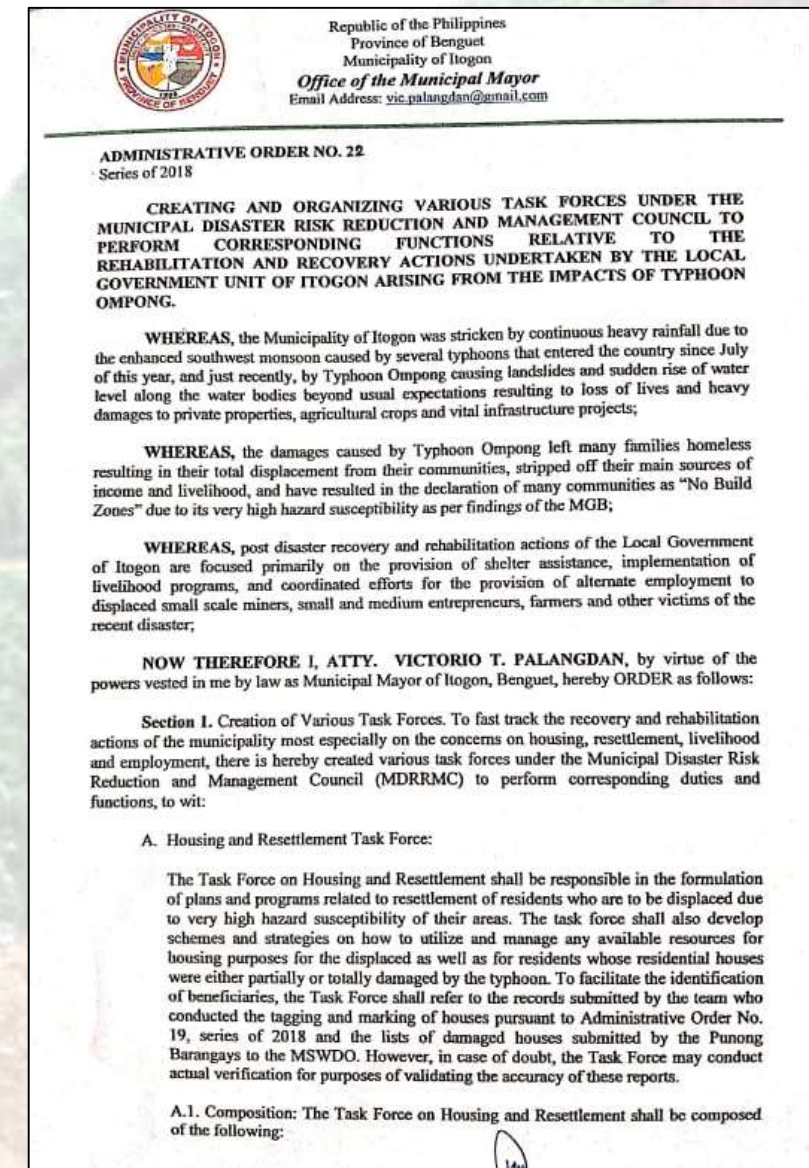
Source: Onsite visit, March 2020

THE CASE OF ITOGON IN NORTHERN PHILIPPINES

- **Administrative Order No. 22 s. 2018: Task Forces on Housing and Resettlement, Training and Livelihood, and Employment.**
 - ✓ *Two (2) relocation sites in Ampucao and Tuding [...] declared **not suitable as a relocation site.***
 - ✓ Support from NHA

NBZ as a PDRR Spatial Development Strategy

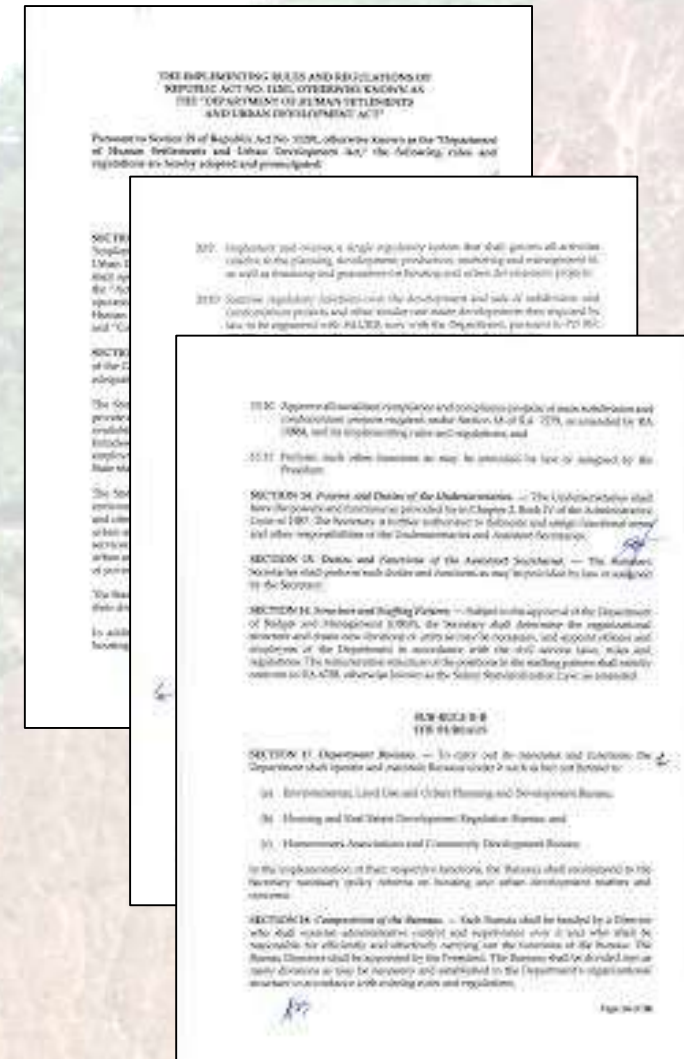
- ✓ *Philippine DRRM Act and National DRRM Plan*
- ✓ *Cordillera Regional Physical Framework Plan (2004-2034)*
- ✓ *Comprehensive Land-use Plan (CLUP) and Zoning Ordinance*
- No existing cohesive policy to guide [...] in the implementation of relocation



Source: Itogon MDRRMC

THE CASE OF ITOGON IN NORTHERN PHILIPPINES

- Lack of specific legal provisions in the PDRRMS... No playbook to guide post-disaster relocations (i.e. Philippine DRRM Act and National DRRM Plan).
- ✓ *Limited descriptions in the PDRRMA and NDRRMP*
- ✓ *Adoption of existing state laws such as the **Republic Act No. 7279** or Urban Development and House Act of 1992 and other affiliated housing laws and their implementing rules*
- ✓ ***Republic Act No. 11201** creating a new agency called Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development*



THE CASE OF ITOGON IN NORTHERN PHILIPPINES



Republika ng Pilipinas
Komisyon ng Karapatang Pantao ng Pilipinas
(Commission on Human Rights of the Philippines)

Preface

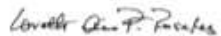
In the wake of natural disasters, inequalities are often made visible as the most marginalized are at greater risk of displacement and loss of livelihood. Experience has underscored the importance of getting recovery efforts right from a human rights perspective so that pre-existing patterns of vulnerability and disadvantage are neither perpetuated nor reinforced. The context in which the international community comes together to help the Philippines rise from the destruction brought about by typhoon Yolanda is no exception.

We believe that the Philippines should seize this opportunity to address these concerns as promptly and effectively as possible, and to prevent their recurrence by applying relevant international human rights norms and standards. Making comprehensive efforts to realize the right to adequate housing in reconstruction efforts is an opportunity. While disaster response will not — and should not — replace development efforts, it provides an occasion to redress the inequalities that either exacerbated the natural disaster's impacts or were made visible by it, and to contribute to efforts to progressively realize the right to adequate housing for all, notably by improving tenure security. In this spirit, this advisory on housing, land and property rights has been jointly developed to guide relevant national government agencies, local government units, affected communities and other stakeholders on the human rights-based approach to housing, land and property concerns arising in the context of the humanitarian response to natural disasters.

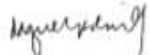
The large scale of destruction of housing, and the high level of displacement caused by the typhoon has called attention to the question of housing, land and property rights. Disaster relief and recovery efforts have so far, with notable exceptions, taken a compartmentalized view of standards protecting these rights. Without the benefit of information about the Government's recovery plan, adequate coordination among national and local authorities, and sufficient participatory mechanisms in decision-making processes, affected communities are at risk of being deprived of their rights through forced relocations.

It has been difficult to challenge these situations to enable affected families and individuals to receive fair and just compensation for losses as access to justice mechanisms has been debilitated in the typhoon stricken areas.

We hope that this advisory will prove useful in promoting and protecting the right to adequate housing of people affected by Typhoon Yolanda and other natural disaster situations in the Philippines.


Loretta Ann P. Rosales

Chairperson
Commission on Human Rights of
the Philippines



Raquel Rolnik
United Nations
Special Rapporteur on
Adequate Housing
as a component of the Right to an
Adequate Standard of Living

Karapatang Pantao: Likas Sa Atin, Tungkulin Natin

Commonwealth Avenue, 12th P. Complex, Diliman, 1101, Quezon City, Philippines
Tel. Nos. 927-0172 • 928-2013 • 928-5855

- Another relevant aspect of NBZs and post-disaster relocation that must be highlighted are concerns on human rights. Planned relocation should be carried out within a **human rights-based framework** that safeguards civil, political, cultural, social, and economic rights of individuals and communities.

✓ *Human Rights Advisory No. CHR-A2014-001 titled 'Human Rights Standards on Housing, Land and Property Rights of Populations Affected by Typhoon Yolanda.'*

THE CASE OF ITOGON IN NORTHERN PHILIPPINES

- Livelihood improvement and restoration are often neglected in relocation projects, which usually pay more attention to housing (Walch, 2017 & McKellar, et. al., 2019).
 - *Stoppage order on all small-scale mining activities [...] around 3,513 families in Itogon, Benguet were displaced from their source of livelihood.*
- People tend to move and settle in these areas notwithstanding the corresponding hazard because of the benefit of livelihood opportunities they may find (i.e. TS Washi in Iligan City and Cagayan de Oro).
- Displacement and relocation may create new conditions poverty (Chen, et. al., 2017).
- Livelihood strategies including the provision of seed capital funds, emergency employment programs and market matching activities and job fairs were initiated for affected community members (Cordillera RDC, 2018).

THE CASE OF ITOGON IN NORTHERN PHILIPPINES

- The challenge for a PDRR relocation of communities in the Cordillera should also take into consideration the **social relationship of communities**.
 - ✓ *Relocation can have a huge impact on the relocated groups' cultural, social, and political aspects (Lu, et al, 2013).*
- Removing people and communities away from their original settlements may mean their separation from their ***existing and pre-disaster institutions and ways***.
 - ✓ *Relocation policies should ensure that culturally-relevant structures, such as dap-ays or ator, be included to the new relocation area.*
- The continuity of social coherence and identity through ***design of houses and other infrastructures in relocations sites***.
 - ✓ *Owner-driven design and construction process (Alexander, 1998)*

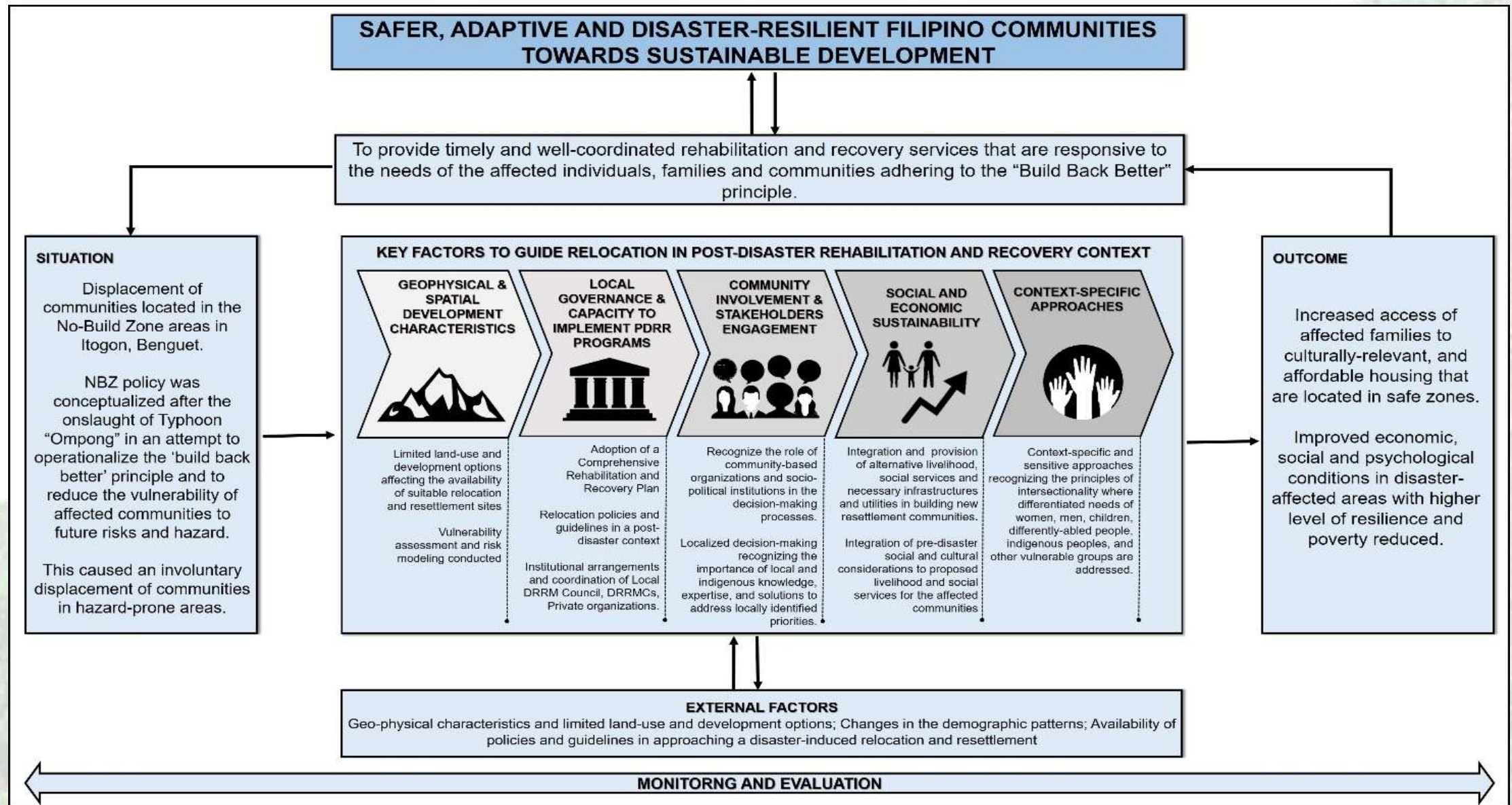
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- **Community involvement** in post disaster re-construction is an important ingredient to the overall success of re-development.
 - ✓ *Labey Indigenous Peoples Concerned Community Association, Inc. (LIPCCAI) in the relocation area in Bokod, Benguet (De Jesus and Palisoc, 2014)*
- **Indigenous socio-political systems and institutions** in the region should be recognized in the PDRR process.
 - ✓ *Ibaloi communities constitute the tongtong or council that is tasked to make decisions. For the Kankanaeys the amam-a and Tinggian communities the laklakay composed of council that makes decisions of behalf of the whole community)*
- **Local and Indigenous Knowledge** to understand the geophysical characteristics and history of the area to provide decision makers guidance in the identification of suitable relocations sites
 - ✓ *Guimbatan-Fadgyas studied methodology of utilizing Indigenous Knowledge in Landslide Risk Mapping in Ifugao.*

THE CASE OF ITOGON IN NORTHERN PHILIPPINES

- ***Intersectionality*** applied in post-disaster management can be understood in two ways:
 - First, the vulnerability to disasters are influenced by wide array of social factors
(i.e. gender, class, age and disability, situational variables, such as where people live, their health, household composition and size and the resources)
 - Second, in responding and preparing for recovery [...] intersectional approaches recognize that people will have different needs, priorities and capacities.
- Programs and projects [...] guided by a **full understanding of differentiated needs rather than focusing solely on reducing existing vulnerabilities.**

PROPOSED LOGIC MODEL IN APPROACHING PDRR



CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- The institutionalization of PDRR as a distinct thematic area.
 - ✓ *The Philippine DRRM Act of 2010, NDRM Framework and NDRRM Plan*
 - ✓ *Complemented by the formulation of Rehabilitation and Recovery Planning Guide.*
 - ✓ *Importance of implementing land-use and spatial development strategies including relocation as a transformative disaster risk reduction, and development strategy with the **assumption that relocation reduces the vulnerability of communities.***
- However, the article argued that [...] NBZ and relocation may not always be a good practice for PDRR strategy. The case of Itogon, Benguet provided that such implementation **does not always reduce the vulnerability of the communities simply by removing them away from the hazard prone area.**

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- It is not enough **to assess and focus on one risk** – for instance, the landslide, attention should also be paid to a multitude of risks and changing risk profiles especially new and **potential risks emerging from socio-economic, political, and cultural dimensions.**
- PDRR and relocations should be a **context-specific** and not a one-size-fits-all approach.
- Should be guided by a full understanding of **differentiated needs** rather than focusing solely on reducing existing vulnerabilities.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

How should we understand and re-think relocation as a PDRR strategy:

1. **Should never be sought without actual plans for the relocation** of affected communities, and progress in the acquisition and social preparation for the victims.
2. Recognize **the impact and projected consequences** related to housing and relocation [...] such policies may produce unintended consequences and in the long term, ***may even increase the existing socio-economic and environmental weaknesses*** that turn natural hazards into disasters.
3. In practice there are **distinct challenges** that these policies should be able to consider [...] challenges identified include the ***limitation in the land-use and spatial development strategy*** for the region,

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