



2015 ACCORD YEAR-ENDER

It has been an unprecedented year. ACCORD has delivered much-needed humanitarian assistance and integrated risk management (IRM) support to 241,936 vulnerable and disaster-affected persons, the most in its five years of existence. ACCORD did not seek such nor expect such a big number and yet it has succeeded in making a difference in the lives of vulnerable and disaster-affected people on this scale, but it succeeded. In terms of geographic spread, the organisation was able to maintain presence directly and with partners in 220 communities in 14 municipalities and two cities across Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao.

At the end of 2015, ACCORD succeeded in completing the delivery of a comprehensive package of assistance consisting of food, non-food-items, emergency shelter, shelter repair materials, livelihood support and capacity building in disaster risk reduction to 148,820 poor people most affected by Haiyan (Yolanda). This number includes students, teachers and non-teaching personnel in public schools, and barangay and municipal local government officials and staff.



While the first phase of Yolanda response prioritized meeting relief and early recovery needs, 2015 was devoted more to strengthening the integrated risk management capacities of communities, local government units and schools. Integrated risk management is an approach that combines disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and ecosystem manage-

ment and restoration. In ACCORD's Yolanda response, risk management in shelter assistance meant promoting the practice of building back safer so that households are able to repair or rebuild in safer locations and that houses can better withstand future hazards.

Communities were supported in making their livelihoods more resilient to disasters through diversification of crops and livelihoods, sustainable agriculture practices, and adjustment of production cycles according to seasonal calendars that take into account the changes in the weather and climate. Communities also protect their livelihood assets (such as corn mills, rice mills, and farm machinery) raised through pooling of common resources by including them in community contingency plans.



To complete the requirements of basic resilience-building of communities, the sectoral (shelter and livelihood) initiatives in mainstreaming risk management was complemented by capacity building of communities and local government units. This was done through the conduct of community

risk assessments, training, contingency and risk reduction planning, and community drills. At the end of 2015, some 107 communities and seven municipal local government units completed their IRM training. These resilience-building activities were made possible by support of SHO through CARE.



Select communities with completed contingency plans conducted evacuation drills to test the effectiveness of their plans. Interest and community ownership were demonstrated through 100% participation of households in these drills. Moreover, partnership with Global Care allowed ACCORD to conduct IRM capacity building in the seven biggest schools in Tacloban City, culminating in school evacuation drills.

The end of 2015 also marks the end of the 5-year Partners for Resilience (PfR), and the mid-term of the Proud of My Purok (PoMP) project. IRM as an approach to resilience-building was developed through PfR and PoMP. The combined reach of PfR and PoMP is 75,596 persons from 24 communities from five municipalities and one city in the Cordillera Administrative Region, CARAGA and Davao regions, and the CAMANAVA sub-region.

Under PfR, 18 communities practicing IRM have developed, tested and updated contingency and risk reduction plans, implemented small-scale mitigation activities, and have incorporated integrated risk management in livelihood strategies. ACCORD supported resilience-building in these communities by working directly with communities, or indirectly by providing technical and management support to three other PfR implementing partners.

In Barangay Potrero in Malabon City where ACCORD directly implemented PfR, capacity building in IRM led the barangay and city local government units to realize that IRM initiatives can only be successful through the cooperation among communities and local government units sharing the same ecosystem. At the end of PfR, ACCORD was able to facilitate agreement among five cities in the Malabon-Navotas-Tullahan-Tinajeros river systems to establish a River Basin Alliance that will address IRM concerns common to the whole river basin. The harmonization of various early warning systems is an application in particular of the landscape approach to the perennial problem of flooding.



ACCORD also continued its advocacy for mainstreaming disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and ecosystem management restoration at all levels. At the national level, ACCORD remained engaged in discussions with the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), Climate Change Commission (CCC) and Department of Education (DepEd). ACCORD has also provided inputs to, and actively participated in forums for the Sunset Review of the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act.



Towards the end of 2015, ACCORD also participated as an implementing partner of an emergency food security and livelihood project in response to the internal displacements in Mindanao, which has become a forgotten disaster. This project, benefiting 17,520 internally displaced persons, is a consortium initiative by CARE, ACF and Save the Children. This marks the first time that ACCORD has extended humanitarian assistance to communities affected by conflict and violence.



The series of displacements of lumad in Mindanao and the killing of their leaders prompted ACCORD to launch a campaign to create awareness and understanding about the humanitarian and human rights issues related to the killing and displacement of the lumad, and to generate support to meet their humanitarian needs. The organization was supported by its volunteers, who generously donated their time and skills to the campaign.



The campaign to support the lumad took different forms, from bringing the issue to the public through mainstream as well as social media, and organizing small forums. ACCORD also brought up the issue in a high-level meeting in Belgium, Brussels on 12 October 2015, with the European Commission Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department (ECHO).

It has been a rewarding year. ECHO invited ACCORD through CARE Nederland to be a panellist in a high-level side event to the 2015 Paris Climate Conference (COP 21). Acknowledging its extensive experience in



disaster risk reduction, ACCORD was requested to discuss integration of climate change adaptation to disaster risk management. Sindy Obias represented ACCORD in the panel discussion which also featured Adam Boukolos (Director of the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction), Jane Madgwick (CEO of Wetlands International), and James Close (Director of the World Bank Climate Change Group). Monique Pariat, Director-General of ECHO, chaired the panel discussion.

ACCORD's Sindy Obias was also a presenter in another COP 21 side event which looked into issues of climate justice, food, and disasters. The side event was organized by ICCO, Cordaid and CARE. In yet another COP 21 side event, organized by PFR, PAGASA with support from ACCORD discussed experiences in applying the landscape approach in harmonizing early warning system in the MANATUTI river basins and the creation of the River Basin Alliance as a platform for addressing risks shared by local authorities sharing one ecosystem. This PFR side event also was the occasion for the PFR Alliance and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs to sign the contract on the Strategic Partnership for Resilience.



Back in the Philippines, the strong partnership between ACCORD and Barangay Potrero under PFR was rewarded with the Metro Manila Region Gawad Kalasag for Best Practices in Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Risk Reduction. Barangay Potrero placed second in the first instance that the barangay joined the competition.

Most rewarding however are the expressions of appreciation coming from communities and local government units across the country, thanking ACCORD for the support that has helped them recover from disasters and reach milestones towards achieving resilience.

The challenges faced by ACCORD were similarly unprecedented. These have all the more made the achievements and rewards more meaningful. ACCORD looks forward to 2016 and beyond with the courage to surmount obstacles, achieve greater successes, made possible by the unwavering support of partners old and new.

