



Evaluation of Natural Disaster Reconstruction Assistance in the Philippines 2013-14 to 2018-19



**International Assistance Evaluation Division (PRA)
Global Affairs Canada
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Executive Summary

Summary of Recommendations

1. **Address immediate challenges to program sustainability.**
2. **Provide incentives for partner collaboration.**
3. **Ensure continuity of programming.**
4. **Determine Global Affairs Canada's official approach and messaging on supporting disaster risk reduction.**

The evaluation focused on the \$20.5 million Haiyan reconstruction program. A sample of other international assistance projects was also included in order to look at the impact of natural disasters across a range of international assistance programming.

Though reconstruction programming could have been more timely, and targeted fewer people, the Philippines program was ultimately able to respond to the short and long-term needs of those affected by the typhoon. Consecutive programming following Typhoon Haiyan reflected positively on Canada as a donor country because support continued beyond the humanitarian response. In addition, the program was aligned with the Philippine Government's priorities and complemented other programming in the region.

The reconstruction program was made up of four separate projects that were unique in that they did not just **improve peoples' economic well-being**, they **addressed gender equality** and **promoted future preparedness** as well. In particular, the program helped participants to: improve their business skills, access capital, and insure their businesses. Ultimately, this increased their incomes and their preparedness. The program also promoted gender equality, which gave women more influence within the family and empowered them to enter the workforce.

When assessing the broader sample of international assistance programming, the evaluation found that the Philippines was a good example of how programs can reduce the impacts of natural disasters and climate change. It also showed the need for better environmental and climate change analysis, not just in the Philippines program, but within Global Affairs Canada as a whole. Unfortunately, "disaster risk reduction" was an orphan file without clear leadership, leaving investments in high-risk and vulnerable areas exposed.

The program fostered communities' financial resilience, and participants expressed confidence in the sustainability of their businesses. Public sector partnerships were essential for supporting these communities post project, especially considering that the number and severity of natural disasters were expected to increase.

As departmental priorities shifted, the Philippines program was expanding into new areas. To ensure continuity, it would need to build on previous successes, but also continue to align with the principles of working in a middle-income country.

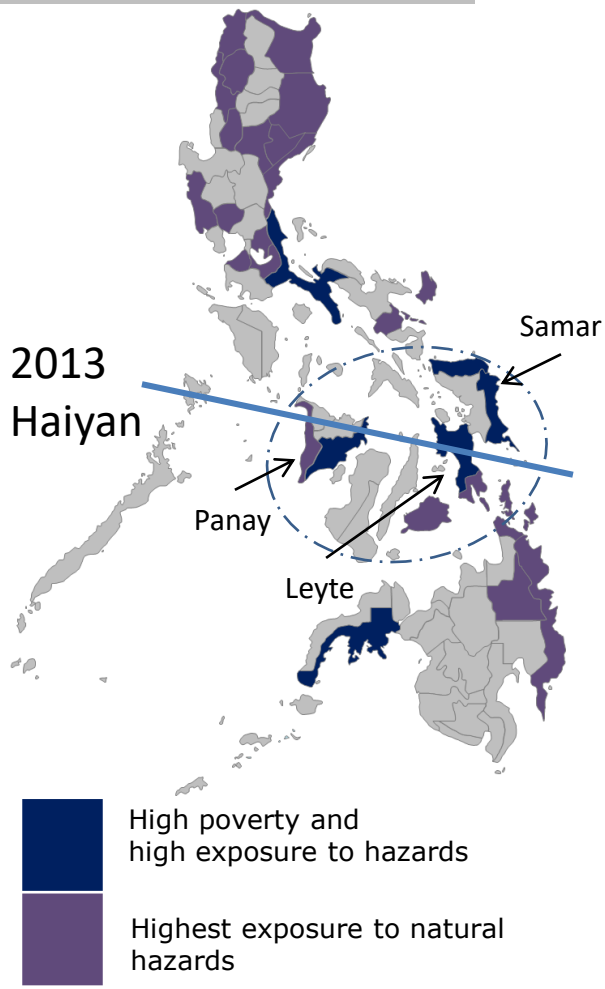
Background



Background

Typhoon Haiyan

The Philippines ranks third in the world for risk and exposure to natural disasters



The Philippines is situated on the Ring of Fire, a path along the Pacific Ocean with many active volcanoes and earthquakes. As a result, the Philippines is highly exposed to natural disasters. During the period of the evaluation, losses and damages came from two major earthquakes, 49 typhoons, as well as other natural hazards, costing approximately \$8 billion a year in damages. Experts stated that climate change will increase the number and severity of natural disasters in the area.

Canada has maintained a close and strong relationship with the Philippines. This has included work in regional forums, particularly the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. In 2016, Canada committed to support its vision for disaster-resilient nations and safer communities.

Canada's official development assistance to the Philippines was approximately \$13 million per year until 2013, when Typhoon Haiyan struck. Typhoon Haiyan (known in the Philippines as Yolanda) made landfall on November 8, 2013 as a category five storm. With winds over 240 kilometres per hour, this super typhoon was one of the most powerful in history. It killed more than 6,000 people, disrupted the livelihoods of 14 million, and cost approximately \$15 billion in damages. A year later, Typhoon Hagupit (locally known as Ruby) hit Eastern Samar as a category two storm. Locals perceived it to be a storm sent to devastate those who were missed by Yolanda.

Canada's Disaster Assistance Response Team was dispatched to support immediate Haiyan relief operations. **The Government of Canada provided \$90.5 million in a response package. This included \$43 million donated by the Canadian public through a matching fund.** Response efforts focused on emergency shelter, health, sanitation, food assistance, and individuals' financial recovery.

Haiyan ripped through the islands in the Visayas regions (see highlight on map). These islands had a history of devastating disasters, including annual typhoons and flooding. They were also among the poorest regions in the country. The reconstruction program focused its efforts there.

As a result of the humanitarian and reconstruction efforts, Canadian international assistance to the Philippines increased significantly. Between 2013-14 and 2017-18, Canada provided \$163 million.

Sources: Philippines' National Economic and Development Authority, 2014; Chief Financial Officer, Global Affairs Canada

Findings

WALA SA
SARILI
PAMILYA

MARUNONG
MAKISAMA

ECONOMICALLY
EMPOWER

LOVE

PRINSIPYO

SAKRIPISYO

PURSIGIDO

Kasama ang
komunidad

FINANCIAL
SUPPORT

PRAYER

... ipadayon ...
... panginatagan ...
... mag-kamay ...
... paglaban ...

Aina
Last 2018 ng...
... bulad...
... CECI-...
... pagpakabahi...
... kamayda...
... bulad ngan...
... dama...
... anak.

Strong

Disom-ate
An ama pag-asawa damo na pag...
... atabang...
... han gino...
... ngato nining kamat...
... pagpakabahi na mabuligan ko...
... it akan n-

SA Kable ng mga pagsubok
... ibang...
... dapat...
... may...
... PAHL...
... dapat...
... kapangya...

... ina...
... pagmag...
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... n...
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... Edna

Relevance

Key principles for reconstruction included:

- **Using partners already active in the country**
- **Focusing on sectors where Canada was strong**
- **Requiring all funded initiatives to be working toward the same goal of recovering individuals' sources of income**
- **Preparing participants for future disasters**

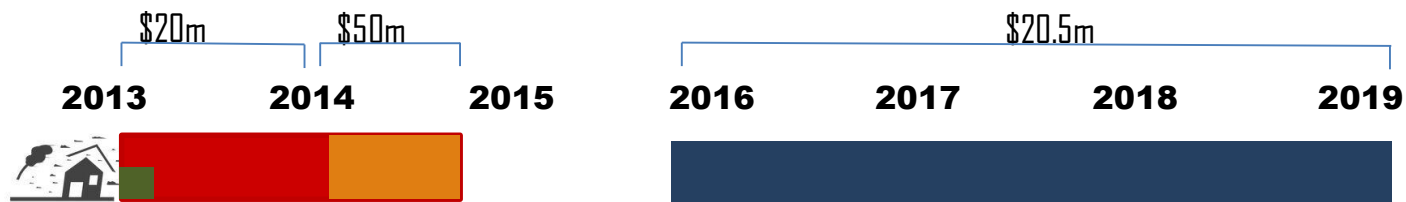
The reconstruction program allowed Canada to provide a phased approach in responding to a natural disaster.

When the Philippine Government officially closed the humanitarian phase in July 2014, Canada had \$20.5 million remaining in its matching fund to disburse.

To ensure funds were spent responsibly, a call for proposals for a reconstruction program was designed based on best practices and lessons learned from Canada's previous responses to major natural disasters (e.g. 2010 Haiti earthquake, 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami).

A three-phased approach focused on relief, early recovery and reconstruction demonstrated Canada's commitment to addressing the long-term challenges that communities face when recovering from a natural disaster. This approach to funding all three phases aligned well with expert opinions.

Canada gained a positive reputation with national and local government officials, local partners and communities as the donor that stayed the course by providing funding for relief, early recovery and reconstruction activities. Regular formal and informal gatherings between government officials regarding Canada's response supported the building of the bilateral relationship.



DART: Military provided clean water and medical care, performed evacuations, and cleared debris.

Relief: Provided food, clean water, shelter, health care, and psychological support.

Early Recovery: Cash to start small income-generating activities.

Reconstruction: Provided training to improve small businesses with some initiatives also providing capital, insurance, and savings programs.

Relevance

3 Key Priority Areas for Programming



“Disaster risk reduction” definition:

Policies and strategies to prevent, reduce and manage the risks posed by natural disasters. Guided by the *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030*.

Canada aligned its support with the Philippine Government’s plan for economic recovery.

The Philippine Government developed a national *Yolanda Comprehensive Rehabilitation and Recovery Plan* to manage investments following Typhoon Haiyan. The plan would cost approximately \$4 billion, of which **\$3 billion would need to be funded by donors**. Canada supported the funding gap by aligning its programming with the Philippine Government’s priorities of “restoring peoples’ means of livelihoods” and “increasing the resilience and capacities of communities in coping with future hazard events.”

Although Canada was a relatively small donor, the \$90.5 million in support allowed it to respond to each phase. The \$20.5 million reconstruction program allowed four partners to work on three islands (Panay, Samar and Leyte), **reaching a reported total of 44,600 women and men affected by Typhoon Haiyan**.

The reconstruction program complemented Canada’s existing economic programming as well as regional training on how to respond to natural disasters.

Reconstruction projects complemented Canada’s previous sustainable economic growth programming by focusing on **improved economic well-being for women and men** affected by the typhoon. Canadian programming prior to the typhoon already integrated training on gender awareness, and how to prepare for and manage the impacts of natural disasters. Outside of humanitarian and reconstruction programming, funding was predominately focused on economic growth at a national level with the Asian Development Bank, the International Finance Corporation, and the Philippine Commission on Women, among others.

At the regional level, **deepening the relationship with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations was a key priority**. Canada funded training and research for member countries on how to improve disaster risk reduction and emergency response.

Relevance

An estimated 1 million Filipinos were plunged into poverty after Typhoon Haiyan.



Top Need
=
Capital

Community members confirmed that their most significant need after the typhoon was to restore their sources of income.

Typhoon-affected communities needed to restore their sources of income. Canada responded.

Canadian reconstruction **projects targeted some of the most vulnerable regions, as well as women who were disproportionately affected.** In affected communities, projects targeted some of the most economically vulnerable individuals, including farmers and fisher folk whose livelihoods were greatly impacted. But owners of small convenience stores (known in Tagalog as “sari-sari,” or variety, stores) needed to demonstrate that they already had a sustainable business in order to participate.

The projects provided the support participants were looking for. They provided necessary inputs such as seeds and merchandise, and rebuilt damaged assets including stores and fields. Participants also wanted access to micro-financing and connections to suppliers and markets, which some initiatives provided.

However, there were inefficiencies. Reconstruction activities in which both the Philippine Government and funded partners engaged overlapped in some areas. They provided similar training and supplies to agricultural producers and sari-sari stores.

Reconstruction programming did not address the full extent of needs. There were gaps in the timeliness of response.

Participants in some regions said their **needs were much greater than what the projects were able to provide.** Capital provided by the program was typically capped at approximately \$260 per person, and training was the focus. For many, this was not enough funding to rebuild and grow their business, and loan options were limited or non-existent. Although some projects provided micro-finance, this was not accessible to all participants.

The reconstruction projects officially launched in 2015, but activities only began in 2016, three years after Typhoon Haiyan struck. **The majority of participants in two projects did not join until 2018, five years after the typhoon.** Participants wanted to restore their financial independence immediately after the disaster.

Relevance

Program activities were consistent with key principles for supporting a middle-income country.

Five principles for working in a middle-income country were identified by academic literature and responses from disaster risk reduction experts and project participants.



Work with the government (or lobby them) to reach the most vulnerable and marginalized people, since poverty and inequality still persist.

1. Projects focused on impoverished and typhoon-devastated communities, and aligned with the government's reconstruction plan. Broader programming aimed to build national capacity.



Work to **support partnerships** across government, non-governmental organizations, academia and the private sector.

2. Implementing partners connected local governments, academia and insurance companies to achieve results.



Provide loans instead of grants to reduce dependence and promote growth.

3. The program recognized the need for providing loans, similar to other donors. Some initiatives provided micro-loans. Programming supported private-public partnerships through the Asian Development Bank, which was providing loans. But providing direct loans at a national level was not possible. Departmental efforts were in process to create this capability for programs.



Be mindful of how donor support is communicated, as middle-income country governments want to be seen as capable partners.

4. Phillipine Government officials noted many positive engagements with Canadian officials. While Canada's reputation was positive, there was discontent concerning how the international community communicated support during the Typhoon Haiyan response. Phillipine officials felt their national response was circumvented and overshadowed. As a result, the Phillipine Government began to introduce new levels of oversight for future humanitarian assistance.



Create conditions for a **sharing relationship** where ideas, technology and innovative approaches are gleaned from both countries.

5. There were attempts to include Canadian academic institutions, but efforts did not lead to tangible results. Agricultural communities wanted more technology transfers from Canada. Universities in the Phillipines wanted to partner with Canadian academic institutions.

Defining Reconstruction Assistance

“A disaster risk reduction [DRR] project versus an agriculture project shouldn’t necessarily be *different*; we need to see DRR as an integral part of development”

- Dr. Balfour Spence, Rural Development Institute at Brandon University

The reconstruction program took a conscious approach to integrating disaster risk reduction and gender equality in support of improving livelihoods. Local implementing partners saw this as innovative.

Global Affairs Canada’s strategic environmental assessment for the Philippines program identified natural disasters as its most significant risk factor and a major impediment to the country’s development. As a result, programming activities and results outside of the reconstruction program also included developing disaster risk reduction plans, improving government capacity to plan and prepare for disasters, diversifying participants’ livelihoods and building participant knowledge about disaster preparedness.






The reconstruction program focused on the community level. The Philippines program typically engaged in capacity building efforts with the national government, local governments and the private sector. This approach aligned well with principles for working in a middle-income country. The reconstruction program consisted of livelihood interventions directly supporting typhoon-affected communities, which aligned well with principles for supporting reconstruction efforts.

The reconstruction program was different from Global Affairs Canada’s usual sustainable economic growth programming in that it included training to prepare individuals and their businesses for future disasters. Local implementers felt that this comprehensive approach to addressing livelihoods, gender and disaster risk reduction within the same project was an **innovative way of supporting post-disaster reconstruction.**

Alignment with Good Practices in Reconstruction

The reconstruction program design was consistent with a number of principles for successful and responsible reconstruction support.

Good reconstruction principles were identified by disaster risk reduction experts, academic literature and project participants. The reconstruction program’s design elements were then compared to these principles to identify existing good practices and where potential future programming should focus.

	<p>Promote inclusion and equity in reconstruction activities to address marginalization Gender was integrated into the reconstruction program as a cross-cutting theme, with specific training modules to promote gender equality.</p>	<p>Plan for reconstruction before a disaster strikes The program emphasized business continuity planning and preparedness so participants would consider how they would reconstruct their business in case of another disaster.</p>
	<p>Incorporate a “build back better” approach to break the cycle of dependence on relief The program focused on building more durable livelihoods protected by insurance and savings.</p>	<p>Focus on the community level The program chose to focus on needs in the Western and Eastern Visayas regions.</p>
	<p>Foster a sense of preparedness The program trained participants on how to respond to disasters. Local governments were supported with drills and early warning systems.</p>	<p>Support diversification of income sources The program supported participants in diversifying their crops or products.</p>
	<p>Foster the active participation of the community in design and implementation Program goals were chosen by Global Affairs Canada staff in consultation with the Philippine Government. Partners designed interventions based on their own needs assessments.</p>	<p>Ensure the time frame is aligned with objectives A short implementation period for many participants did not allow sufficient time for behavioural change.</p>
	<p>Don’t delay reconstruction The program was not consistent with local timelines for reconstruction.</p>	<p>Ensure safe shelter to reduce exposure to natural hazards Most participants remained in temporary shelters. Although essential, this may not always be a role for Canada.</p>

Results

The reconstruction program increased participants' business skills, resulting in improved operations and products.

Intermediate expected result: Increased participation of targeted women and men affected by Typhoon Haiyan in sustained and resilient economic activities.

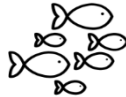
There were **some variances in results** for certain sectors. Seaweed, herb and rice farmers experienced climate-related challenges (e.g. rising sea temperatures) that greatly limited their harvests. Rice and coconut farmers were also faced with volatile markets, with many unable to sell their harvests.



Project participants improved their business skills (e.g. financial literacy, savings techniques, business management) which improved their business operations.



The value of farm produce (e.g. cassava, abaca) was increased through research, new partnerships and a better awareness of available markets.



Fish stocks were protected and yielding greater fish supplies for fisher folk.



Sari sari stores sold more and different products (e.g. karaoke machine rentals).



Small female-run businesses improved the quality and quantity of their products (e.g. woven baskets, dried fish).

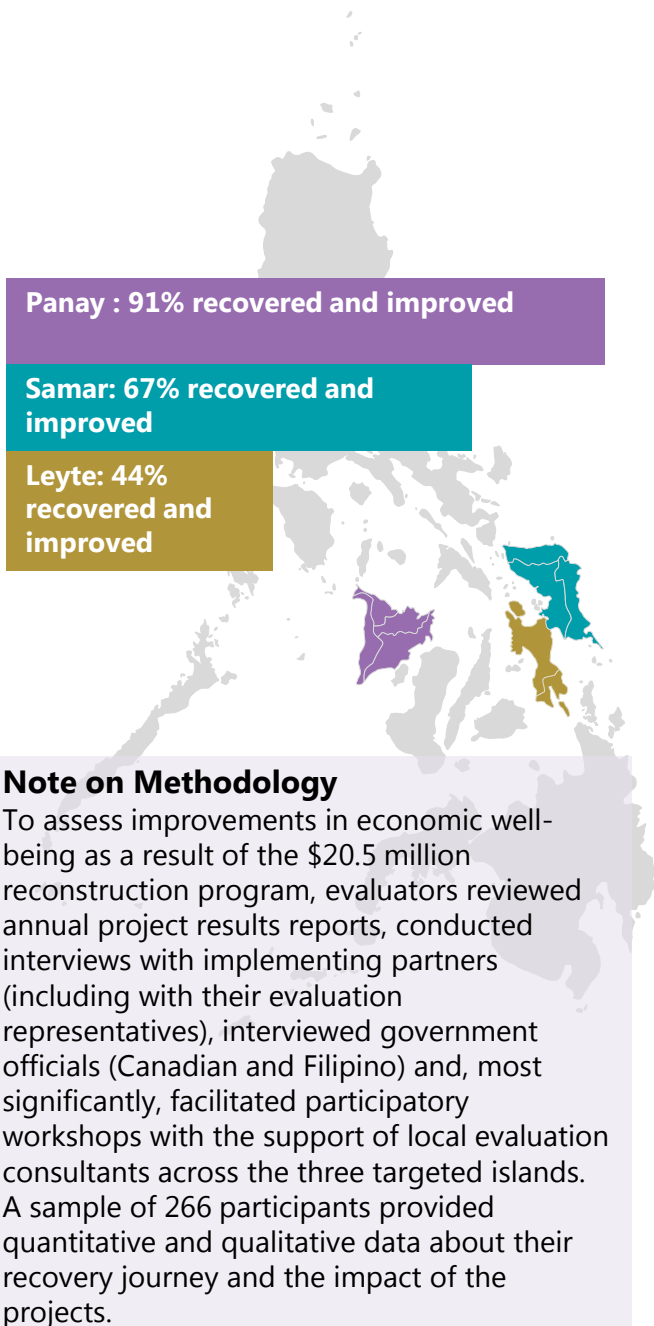
The reconstruction program provided improved access to business services, but to a lesser extent than hoped for.

Intermediate expected result: Improved access to financial and business development services for targeted micro-enterprises affected by Typhoon Haiyan, particularly those owned or operated by women.

- Participants accessed capital to reopen, refurbish or grow their business.
- Communities established group savings schemes.
- Tailored insurance packages were developed for small convenience stores. Some participants were enrolled.
- Farmers enrolled in government-provided insurance packages.

Results were not significant in these areas. Not all participants were able to access capital to rebuild, or the capital provided was not sufficient. There were concerns about whether the new micro-insurance products would have continued uptake by participants after the project.

Results



Note on Methodology

To assess improvements in economic well-being as a result of the \$20.5 million reconstruction program, evaluators reviewed annual project results reports, conducted interviews with implementing partners (including with their evaluation representatives), interviewed government officials (Canadian and Filipino) and, most significantly, facilitated participatory workshops with the support of local evaluation consultants across the three targeted islands. A sample of 266 participants provided quantitative and qualitative data about their recovery journey and the impact of the projects.

The reconstruction program helped typhoon-affected women and men to recover and, for many, to improve their income sources.

Ultimate expected result: Improved economic well-being for women and men affected by Typhoon Haiyan

A sample of project participants were asked to rate to what extent they had recovered their livelihoods as a result of the project. In other words, they were asked whether they had secured greater and more consistent income sources.

100% of participants sampled recovered their livelihood

73% of participants sampled recovered and improved their livelihood

There were regional differences in the results when participants were asked whether the project had supported them to not just recover, but also improve their income sources.

Factors that led to lower levels of success included:

- Working in areas that were more heavily typhoon-devastated
- Working in areas where poverty was more widespread
- Working where other donors had already provided support
- Working with individuals for a shorter amount of time
- Targeting too many individuals given the resources available

Many participants in Leyte and Samar had just started with the project in 2018. It was too soon to tell if their businesses would grow.

Results

Gender

“As women entrepreneurs, our group has really helped us to have an income in addition to our husbands’. The project helped us a lot, not because we earned more, but because before our only role was in the home, taking care of the children. Now we no longer depend on our husbands.”

- Program participant in Eastern Samar



Women packaging their “Squid Crunchies” in their all-female operation in Northern Iloilo, Panay island

Women pursued new or improved economic activities leading to financial independence and increased confidence.

Male and female participants positively reflected on the opportunities provided by all projects to discuss gender roles. The more marginalized women within this group were particularly enthusiastic. **Experiencing financial empowerment was transformative for women who were engaging in economic activities outside the home for the first time.**

Female participants expressed having gained a significant amount of confidence as a result of attending training. Confidence also came from the encouragement provided by the projects to get women into the economy and growing their businesses. Female participants saw themselves for the first time as businesswomen. The formation of women’s groups also allowed for the creation of new networks of support. For some initiatives, women took on new roles as presidents of farmers’ associations, cluster leaders and trainers in climate-smart agricultural practices.

Gender equality training resulted in more husbands supporting their wives’ economic participation by sharing in household responsibilities. Local governments became more gender-aware.

Women reported that their **husbands were helping more** with domestic chores, enabling them to attend to their small businesses. Relationships between husbands and wives were strengthened as a result of having honest discussions regarding their roles in the family.

In case where projects worked with local governments, same results included extending daycare hours, providing training to local government staff and providing improved women’s health insurance coverage.

As a result of training, there were also examples of **official disaster risk reduction plans that considered the different needs of men and women** during evacuations. One local government adopted a gender training curriculum and made it a mandatory marriage counselling course for couples to be married.

Results

Challenges

For one partner, farmers on average increased their annual harvest production from \$930 to \$1,560. However, in 2018, a family of five needed \$3,234 per year to meet basic needs.



Note that individuals relied on a number of income sources.

There were four key challenges where lessons should be learned for future programming:

1. Partners struggled with participant engagement.

Partners spoke about their over-ambitious project scopes and challenges with finding willing participants. One partner experienced high dropout rates.

2. Partners were focused on the number of people reached instead of life-changing impacts for individuals.

Partners felt pressure to demonstrate high outputs and a far reach early in their projects. This was particularly challenging in regions its model was to engage as many participants as possible, which meant over-extending its reach and providing minimal support per person.

Although the majority of participants improved their incomes as a result of the projects, individuals were still living in poverty.

3. The reconstruction projects were not connected.

Although the reconstruction response was designed to be a “program”, it was implemented as a **collection of four separate projects in different geographic areas with limited sharing between partners**. Projects were similar in that each offered training focused on improving financial skills, gender awareness, and preparing for a natural disaster. Despite efforts to bring partners together, partners felt that they were not encouraged to work together in practical ways. With dwindling donor funds, there was also hesitation to partner.

However, two Canadian volunteers placed with different partners found a few small opportunities to link project participants with different partners and to host shared events.

4. Although partners had the same expected results, they measured financial improvement differently, preventing comparability.

Only one partner measured average income improvements.

Results

Factors for Success

“...coordination and collaboration between donors, non-governmental organizations, and government authorities is needed to ensure that all needs are covered. But, the local governments, being closer to the population, can facilitate implementation... especially in the poorest regions of a country.”

- Canada-based reconstruction partner

The reconstruction program implemented good practices for a successful international assistance project.

Notable good practices included:

- Building context awareness (e.g. market research)
- Focusing on capacity building (e.g. train the trainers models)
- Finding the right time for participants (e.g. moving training to summer for fisher folk)
- Providing capital and equipment to complement training (e.g. low-interest loans, tractors)
- Generating broader community engagement and enthusiasm (e.g. micro insurance “road show”)

Partnering with academia and advocating for action on environmental and disaster issues with local government led to innovation.

All partners engaged with academia to achieve success. **Local universities were able to provide community-specific and innovative support**, including developing natural pesticides, designing climate-smart farming practices, and focusing on which agricultural products to grow in an area. One partner contributed to the completion of a processing centre for medium-sized businesses situated on campus. The innovative centre was intended to provide entrepreneurs with holistic support, from product standardization to packaging and marketing.

Three partners engaged heavily with local government. This included getting the support of local government for project activities and encouraging governments to adopt proven activities post project. With two partners, advocacy efforts led to the development of marine protected areas, a necessary innovation for protecting fish supplies. These engagements also **supported local government officials in improving their own disaster risk reduction plans** and working closer with community members.

Designing Disaster- Sensitive Programming

\$1 spent on prevention

=

**\$7 spent on
reconstruction**

Experts argued it was more costly to rebuild than to protect against risks, pointing to the necessity of creating disaster-sensitive programs.

There was a continued need for expanding “disaster-sensitive” programming to support the achievement of results and overall cost savings.

The evaluation reviewed a sample of 15 projects in addition to the reconstruction program. Over half of these projects were impacted by disasters, including subsequent typhoons and rising sea temperatures. There were also examples of female-run businesses previously supported by Canada that were wiped out by Typhoon Haiyan.

Although the bilateral program was acutely aware of natural disaster risks and was working to increase communities’ disaster preparedness, there were still instances where partners had to react and scramble to address subsequent disasters. One partner purchased storage bins to protect merchandise for participants, business recovery centres were created, humanitarian assistance was again provided, and certain project activities had to be postponed or cancelled.

Project participants who implemented their new knowledge on how to prepare for natural disasters, including buying insurance, were able to better cope with subsequent typhoons. However, **partners and participants had a tendency to externalize natural disaster risks and to expect support to come from elsewhere.** Project participants who were not prepared and then impacted by disasters were discouraged and lost their financial gains. In the case of seaweed farmers who experienced crop disease, these individuals gave up on the project.

Designing Disaster-Sensitive Programming

“Environment is not often front and centre...by the time the officer has figured out the financial and governance aspects of a project, months have passed before they consider the environmental aspects.”

– Global Affairs Canada staff member

At a departmental level, Global Affairs Canada was reducing its degree of strategic environmental and climate change risk analysis for new programming during the evaluation period.

Repeated changes to planning and reporting processes during the evaluation period left departmental project officers feeling uncertain about the expected level of rigour for environmental analysis moving forward, and in want of more guidance.

For the Philippines program, three key analytical processes were instrumental in ensuring the program integrated disaster risk reduction: the country program strategy, the strategic environmental assessment (SEA), and the environmental action plan. However, these documents were never officially approved by senior management and were set to expire in 2019. It was unlikely that they would be renewed, considering the existence of new tools including Strategia (an electronic planning tool), as well as country vision papers and investment plans. However, within these substitute tools, environmental analysis was limited and weak, with only basic information provided. As a result, experts feared disaster-sensitive programming would decline. One official process was introduced in 2014 that supported environmental analysis: the environmental integration process. However, this process was limited to addressing project-specific risks and opportunities. It did not allow for designing a strategic disaster-sensitive portfolio.

A 2019 OECD Peer Learning Exercise report confirmed the department’s challenges with strategic environmental analysis, reporting that environmental integration was an afterthought for many of the partners, that partners (and officers) lacked technical expertise in the field, and that strategic environmental assessments were reduced in bilateral programs. The report provided suggestions to better mainstream environmental analysis and ensure effective follow-up. Some examples included using existing specialists to promote coherence; reintroducing SEAs with follow-up; ensuring staff access the technical support they need; making stronger linkages between policy areas, including humanitarian assistance, health, and peace and security; and creating a help desk within the department.

Limited to Projects

Weak

Weak

Weak

~~Country Program Strategy~~

Strategic Environmental Assessment?

Environmental Integration Process

Vision Paper

~~Environmental Action Plan~~

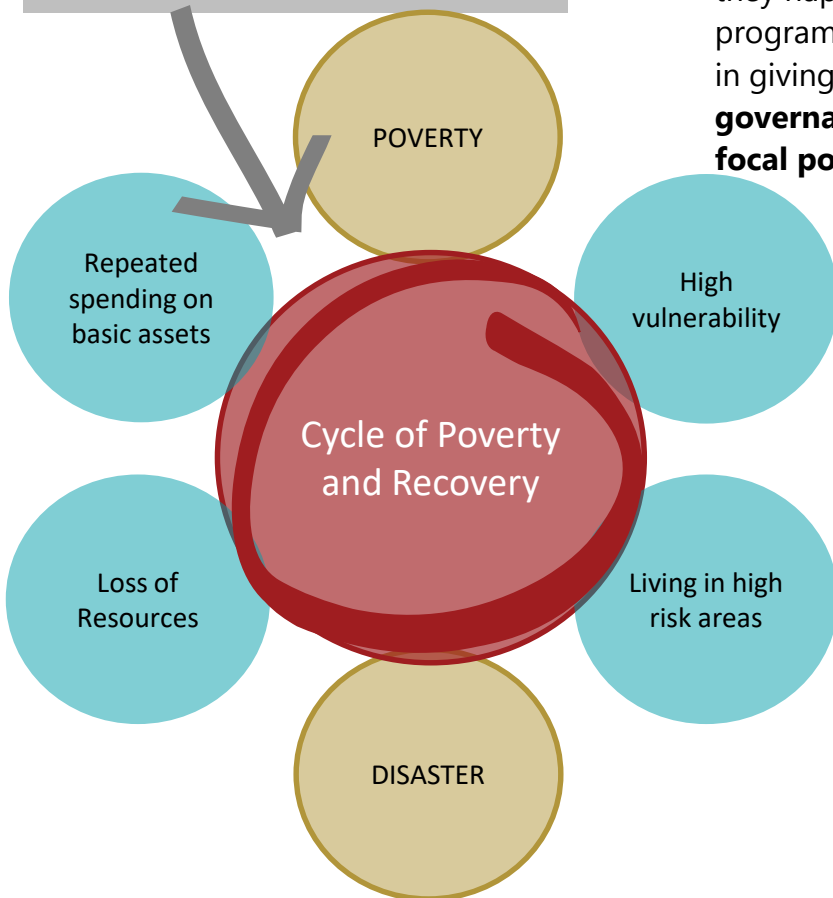
~~Investment Plan~~

~~Integrated Country Strategy~~

~~Environmental Sustainability – Corporate Reporting~~

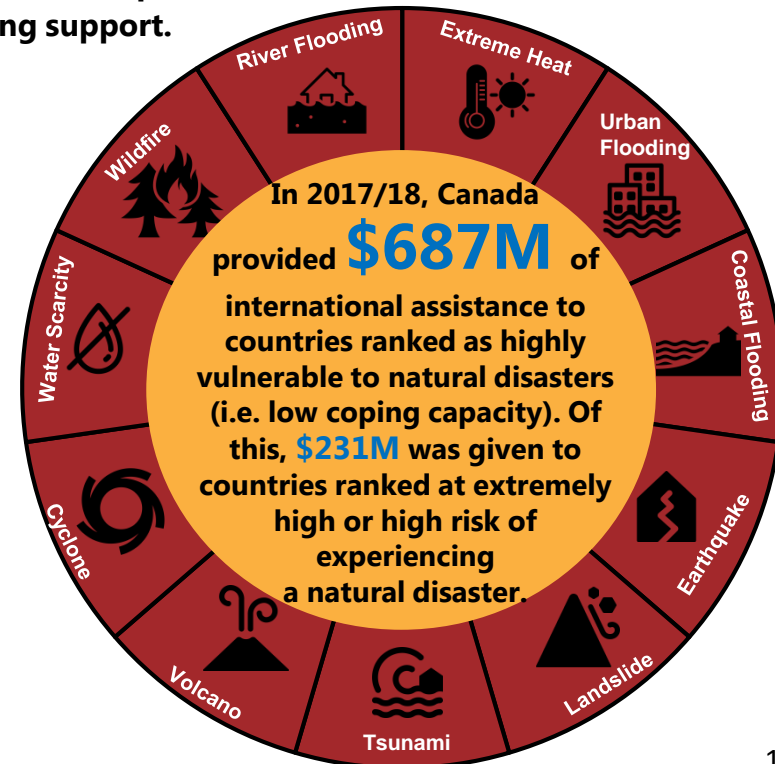
Designing Disaster-Sensitive Programming

In high-risk areas, people are trapped in a cycle of poverty and recovery. Holistic support is necessary to break the cycle.



“Disaster risk reduction” was considered an orphan file within Global Affairs Canada. Without a lead, guidance was scattered and limited to immediate humanitarian relief.

Over half of the 19 Philippines projects sampled experienced losses as a result of disasters. Responsibility for disaster risk reduction remained unclaimed in the department. The *Feminist International Assistance Policy* included mentions of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, but only under certain policy pillars. The department’s International Humanitarian Assistance and Natural Disaster Response division offered natural disaster response training, but this was limited to a humanitarian response and did not cover the subsequent early recovery and reconstruction phases of a response, or preparing for disasters before they happen. Environmental specialists at Headquarters did offer the Philippines program high-level guidance, and the local consultant in the Philippines was helpful in giving implementing partners practical, albeit not timely, advice. Overall, **governance and expertise on the topic was scattered and lacked a coherent focal point for programming support.**



Prospects for Sustainability

Participants were confident in the long-term sustainability of their small businesses.

Reconstruction projects implemented good practices for promoting the sustainability of results, including **focusing on training and supporting the formation of collectives**.

Regarding training, participants felt that their newly enhanced skills would allow them to continue to improve their livelihoods. Reconstruction projects incorporated a “train the trainer” approach and climate-smart agriculture demonstration sites to foster wider adoption.

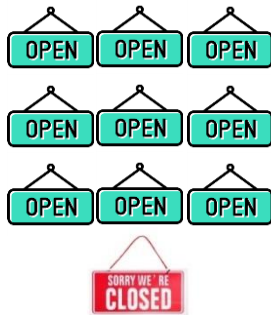
Projects supported the formation of cooperatives, associations, and community savings and loans groups to allow small business owners to access better resources and profits. Participants were reasonably confident that these groups would support their continued livelihoods improvements.

Persistent threats to the sustainability of results remained.

At the time of the evaluation, projects were preparing to close despite a number of challenges to immediate sustainability:

- **Upcoming elections** and local politics were threatening the success of certain community associations as well as the expansion of a marine protected area.
- For one partner, implementing an irrigation system was essential, but **additional time and resources** were necessary to accomplish the task.
- Community groups admitted that they **did not have the necessary savings** to maintain provided equipment, such as a shared tractor (note: equipment was often provided by the Philippine government).
- Subsequent **natural disasters** wiped out project-supported harvests (e.g. seaweed) and mangrove nurseries, which were not replaced.
- Sari sari store owners were **discouraged** after attending a trade fair with suppliers who were not interested in selling to them.

Over 90% of evaluation workshop participants expressed confidence in the long-term sustainability of their businesses.



Unintended Outcomes

The projects generated spin-off employment opportunities that were not sustainable. For example, an inn was established to host international staff; catering services and chair rental services were supporting project training workshops; and local staff were hired to support project implementation. These businesses did not have future prospects.

Prospects for Sustainability

Partnerships with the public sector were essential for continuing support to communities vulnerable to typhoons.

Where partners had **early and sustained engagement with the public sector, there was interest from national and local government bodies in adopting certain project initiatives.** For example, local governments invested in “farm to market roads” to allow participants to better transport their agricultural produce. The Philippines’ Technical Education and Skills Development Authority also took on a partner’s “life skills” training curriculum. Several local governments passed ordinances to support organic farming, proper waste management, and marine protection.

Many program participants benefitted from partners supporting their enrollment in the national government’s Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation scheme.

However, local governments in the targeted regions reported having limited resources to either continue activities or to enforce legislation. For example, the success of the Eastern Samar marine protected area was dependent on other districts joining the legislation and mayors accessing funding for the salary of trained enforcement officers, which did not appear promising at the time of the evaluation.

For one partner, local government was minimally engaged as it was felt that the bureaucracy would have slowed down programming activities. However, that partner was struggling to create a sustainability plan in the last months of its project implementation and faced government apathy. As a result, it was likely that the financial management training course developed with the program’s funding would no longer be available.



A co-funded shared services facility for small business support in Tacloban City, Leyte



A life skills training manual developed by the reconstruction program

Prospects for Sustainability

Financial Resilience

“We need to avoid conflating ‘survival’ and being able to recover with the resilience of government citizens. We don’t want to romanticize resilience just because people are able to endure hardship.”

- Dr. Yvonne Su, University of Guelph

Experts noted that the resilience concept has often been deployed to emphasize the need for vulnerable people to ensure their own survival without external support, placing responsibility for recovery on those with the fewest means to do so. These experts advocated for meaningful changes to reduce exposure to hazards, rather than preserving a status quo that is inherently risky.

Reconstruction projects primarily supported improving individuals' financial security and planning for future natural disasters, also known as “financial resilience.”

Given the target communities' high exposure to natural hazards, building resilience was a necessary condition for the long-term sustainability of reconstruction results. Resilience has traditionally been defined as the ability of people or systems to bounce back from an external shock. With natural disasters, resilience can mean the ability to respond and recover quickly, and is closely associated with disaster risk reduction.

As a result of the reconstruction program, individuals' financial resilience was strengthened through:

- The creation of community cooperatives
- Improving personal and group savings
- Increasing access to insurance products
- Supporting the diversification of livelihoods
- Promoting business continuity planning
- Increasing knowledge around business and financial services

These measures aligned well with participants' understanding of resilience. Participants identified that diversifying their income sources and protecting them with insurance, savings and preparedness measures gave them the confidence to be able to face future disasters. **Nearly 80% of focus group participants stated that they were “very confident” in their ability to successfully face and recover from future natural hazards.**

However, despite their expressed confidence, **many still lived in poverty, in temporary shelters that had become their permanent homes, and in high-risk areas** along the shoreline. There was a high likelihood another disaster would throw them back into the cycle of recovery. Additionally, the reconstruction projects predominately focused on agriculture. With climate change, this sector was expected to become increasingly difficult to sustain in the target areas.

Prospects for Sustainability

Forward Thinking

“The overall sustainability of sector results may be negatively affected by changing departmental priorities as this type of thematic programming was deemphasized and phased out.”

- 2017 Formative Evaluation of Canada’s Development Assistance on Extractives and Sustainable Development

The Philippines program may have been at risk of diminishing its impact by expanding into new programming while international assistance resources were decreasing.

Since 2005, Canada’s official assistance to the Philippines, not including the Typhoon Haiyan initiatives, decreased by 50 percent. This steady decrease was due to the fact that the **Philippines’ economy was growing and it was becoming an upper middle-income country.**

Despite targeted programming and the Philippines program’s financial empowerment gains for women, which aligned well with the goals of the new *Feminist International Assistance Policy*, the **program was only able to secure funding for new priority areas.** Programming was being diverted from sustainable economic growth and disaster preparedness to sexual and reproductive health and rights and women’s voice and leadership. This shift was reminiscent of findings in the *2017 Formative Evaluation of Canada’s Development Assistance on Extractives and Sustainable Development*. It found that extractives programming was being abandoned, despite positive results and the fact that expertise was acquired for new priorities.

For the Philippines program, the shift meant ending funding relationships with partners who had hoped to scale up their economic and disaster preparedness initiatives. Similarly, staff had to invest significant time and resources into cultivating new expertise and partnerships.

Evaluators also visited a maternal health and family planning pilot project to learn potential lessons that could apply to the new sexual and reproductive health and rights programming. The pilot demonstrated that investing in maternal health and family planning could limit unplanned pregnancies after a natural disaster. This could increase women’s participation in the economy and support recovery.

Switching the focus to these new areas could support the program’s long-term vision, but it would need to be done in a way that **ensured continuity of programming and alignment with the principles of working in a middle-income country.**

Recommendations



Recommendations

Philippines Program:

- 1) Explore options with partners to attempt to address any outstanding sustainability challenges to ensure projects close, and partners leave, responsibly. Review sustainability risks with reconstruction partners when final reports are submitted. Document lessons learned and opportunities to strengthen future sustainability planning and monitoring processes.
- 2) For new programming, provide incentives to partners to find practical ways to work together and share resources.
- 3) Ensure continuity in programming by demonstrating how the new *Feminist International Assistance* programming builds on previous disaster risk reduction and sustainable economic growth successes while also aligning with principles for working in a middle income country.

Departmental:

- 4) Given the high volume of programming in regions considered high-risk and vulnerable to natural disasters, the department should determine its official approach and messaging on supporting disaster risk reduction and what it would mean to have disaster-sensitive international assistance programming in these countries.

Considerations for Future Programming



Considerations for Future Programming

Opportunities for Innovation:

1) Canada could lead on developing communication and collaboration guidelines for the international donor community during humanitarian interventions. Guidelines would aim to more meaningfully include the affected state government as well as encourage consecutive programming that provides relief, early recovery, reconstruction, disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation.

2) Global Affairs Canada could define the parameters and guidance for developing an “exit strategy” when moving to gradually reduce international assistance in middle-income countries.

Disaster-Sensitive Programming

1) The Philippines program demonstrated that project officers need to be actively creating disaster-sensitive projects by incorporating good practices in disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation to better support their participants in living with dynamic environmental risks.

Use of Experts

- 2) Local environmental experts understood local laws and appropriate strategies while departmental experts ensured high Canadian environmental standards. These experts were often engaged too late in the project design process. Project officers must engage experts early on to support partners in potentially re-designing projects before implementation commences.
- 3) Local universities were valuable partners for the Philippines projects. These institutions provided cutting-edge research and helped to introduce new technologies or other creative local solutions. Universities would have appreciated engagement with Canadian academic institutions. Projects should identify opportunities for local and Canadian academic partnerships.

Coherent Programming

- 4) Although the reconstruction projects were designed to be a program, there was limited collaboration between the partners, resulting in duplication of effort. Project officers will need to provide common expected results and also provide incentives to partners to share and collaborate.
- 5) Reconstruction programming complemented regional programming, which aligned well with an increasing appetite for South-South cooperation and for regional organizations to play a more prominent role. Aligning programming in this way can strengthen Canada’s engagement while building capacity in these regional bodies.

Enhanced Sustainability

- 6) Although the sustainability of results was planned for at the outset of projects, these plans were not always followed, or were forgotten, during implementation. Projects should engage with the public sector at their inception, and align with government priorities to increase the chances of a successful handover. Regular project monitoring needs to more actively address emerging threats to sustainability.

Annexes

Annex I: Evaluation Scope

Annex II: Methodology

Annex III: Limitations

Annex IV: Logic Model (Reconstruction Program)

Annex V: Global Affairs Broader Programming in the Philippines



Annex I: Evaluation Scope

- Covered the \$20.5 million reconstruction program from fiscal year 2013-14 to fiscal year 2018-19.
- Focused on bilateral programming related to natural disaster reconstruction and promoting communities' resilience to natural disasters [Asia Pacific branch (OGM) and Partnerships for Development Innovation branch (KFM)].
- MFM project documents were only lightly reviewed due to the concurrent evaluation of humanitarian assistance.
- International Security branch (IFM) projects were scoped out because of minimal IFM investment and recent evaluation work (Colombia program evaluation, Peace and Stabilization Operations progress review).

Purpose of evaluation

- To contribute to informed decision-making, support policy and program improvements and advance departmental horizontal learning.
- To provide an evidence-based, neutral assessment of international assistance in the Philippines to Canadians, parliamentarians, ministers, central agencies, Global Affairs Canada's management, partners and beneficiaries.

Gender-Responsive?

Evaluation Questions

Relevance

1. To what extent was it relevant for Global Affairs Canada to fund post-disaster reconstruction projects in the Philippines, in light of:
 - Government, multilateral (e.g. ASEAN) and donor investments
 - Typhoon Haiyan's impacts and community needs
 - Canada's mandate, priorities and expertise

Results

2. To what extent did reconstruction projects contribute to expected outcomes, especially for women and girls?
3. In what ways were reconstruction project activities and results different from other similar development projects?
4. For international assistance projects that identified natural disasters or climate change risks in their project design, to what extent were mitigation or adaptation strategies effective and able to support the achievement of results?

Resilience (Sustainability and Efficiency)

5. What were the resilience factors that supported the sustainability of results, particularly for women and girls?
6. Did the presence of a disaster and climate change mitigation strategy affect project efficiency?

Annex II: Methodology

Document Review n= 47 documents

Review of internal Global Affairs Canada documentation, including:

- Policy documents
- Planning and strategy documents
- Briefing notes and memos
- Public reports
- Evaluations, audits, reviews
- Typhoon Haiyan Relief Fund reports, including monitoring and evaluation
- Environmental management plans and the Environmental Integration Process

Literature Review n= 119 books and articles

Review of academic publications as well as secondary sources such as:

- Academia: International aid in a middle-income country, gender-responsive disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, building community resilience
- Philippine Government's Build Back Better philosophy and practices
- International organizations such as the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction: best practices, proven models

Key Stakeholder Interviews n= 138 (61M, 77F)

Semi-structured interviews with:

- Global Affairs Canada management and staff (past and present)
- Other donors
- Implementing agencies and local partners
- Philippine Government
- Asian Development Bank
- Civil society organizations
- Subject matter experts

Project Review : Examination of Disaster Resilience from Planning through Implementation n=19 projects*

Project Review 1: Comparative analysis of the four reconstruction projects to identify:

- Reported project results, challenges, success factors and unintended outcomes;
- Effectiveness of methods for building resilience in micro, small and medium enterprises;
- Key lessons for gender-responsive disaster risk reduction in livelihoods activities; and
- Good practice for disaster reconstruction.

Project Review 2: Review of documents from 15* selected OGM and KFM projects to identify:

- Extent to which projects identified risks from and mitigation strategies for disaster and climate change;
- Analysis of the guidance from departmental experts that projects received, effectiveness of mitigation strategies, and resilience of their efforts, noting any adaptation/modification of spending;
- Extent to which projects were impacted by natural hazards in terms of efficiency losses or threats to sustainability of results

*where applicable, multiple phases were analyzed as a single project


Site Visits Focus groups sessions and participant interviews N= 266 (82M, 144F)

Visits to all reconstruction projects and a sample of other OGM and KFM projects on Typhoon Haiyan-affected islands (n=6 projects).

Site visits were used to validate reported project results, to assess the likelihood that results will be sustainable, and to pilot innovative participatory community engagement methods to gather community opinions on what post-disaster reconstruction and disaster-resilient programming should look like.

Annex III: Limitations

Limitations



There were low response rates to interview requests and limitations in corporate memory among staff, especially regarding the integration of disaster risk mitigation into projects.

There were delays in accessing project documentation due to:

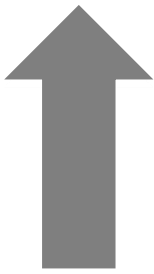
- incomplete or inconsistent document management; and
- limited access to a shared document storage system.

Language barrier with some participants during field mission.

Although the four reconstruction partners were to use the same logic model, they measured project results differently, making it impossible to tally or compare project results.

Projects limited their gender equality engagement to addressing power dynamics within a husband-and-wife relationship. Although it was evident projects included individuals with disabilities, projects did not have an approach for targeting the most vulnerable individuals in communities.

Mitigation Strategies



Evaluators conducted detailed interviews with key experts in the department, including with those who had moved to new positions. Officers were encouraged to participate even when they felt disaster risk reduction was not a focus for their projects.

Evaluators requested specific documents from the mission in Manila and from individual project officers. Evaluators also dedicated considerable time and effort to locating and gathering documents.

Local consultants were hired to facilitate translation. The focus group worksheet was translated into three local languages to facilitate understanding by participants.

Evaluators relied on the data from one partner to demonstrate average income improvements. To determine whether incomes in general increased, evaluators relied on sampled participants and partner case studies.

The evaluation limited its review of gender and inclusivity results to the results of the gender training provided by the reconstruction program.

Annex IV: Logic Model (Reconstruction Program)

Ultimate Outcome	Improved economic well-being for women and men affected by typhoon Haiyan				
Intermediate Outcomes	Increased participation of targeted women and men affected by typhoon Haiyan in sustainable and resilient economic activities		Improved access to financial and business development services for targeted micro, small and medium enterprises affected by typhoon Haiyan, particularly those owned/operated by women		
Immediate Outcome: Partner A	Increased and equal access of women and men to knowledge, skills and services needed to engage in DRR responsive, sustainable and resilient economic activities	Improved capacity of women and men entrepreneurs for increased involvement in the governance and inter-firm relationships of value chains.		Providers of BDS and financial services have improved capacity in delivering gender responsive, climate-smart and easily accessible products and services to male and female owned enterprises.	Local government structures have increased capacity to effectively and transparently support local enterprises, in particular women's enterprises.
Immediate Outcome: Partner B	Increased sustainability, resilience and economic profitability/opportunities for women and men active in the agriculture and fisheries sectors	Increased access to skill development for women, men and youth, aligned with the labour market demand and responding to women's particular circumstances		Increased number of MSME owned/operated by women are empowered to seek financial and business development services	Existing financial and business development services are enabled to offer increased number of products that respond to the specific needs of women led MSME
Immediate Outcome: Partner C	Increased knowledge and skills in sustainable and adaptive economic activities among targeted women and men farmers and fisher folk, and LGUs	Increased ability to restore productive assets in a sustainable way among targeted women and men farmers and fisherfolk in CBOs	Improved knowledge & skills among targeted CBOs and LGUs to deal with disasters and protect livelihoods of communities	Improved organizational capacity of CBOs and LGUs to address the financing and BDS needs of targeted HHs and community enterprises in a gender-sensitive manner.	Increased capacity to access market opportunities among targeted microenterprises, particularly women entrepreneurs, with LGU & private sector support
Immediate Outcome: Partner D	Women and men sari sari store owners have improved business and management skills, and the technical knowledge and equipment necessary to offer diversified products to their customers.	Refurbished and improved sari sari stores normalize and expand local micro-economies, and reduce risks associated with future natural disasters.		Increased micro-insurance products (e.g. property, business interruption insurance) that increase disaster resiliency are available.	Improved regulation of calamity insurance products and increased public insurance literacy.

Annex V: Global Affairs Canada's Broader Programming in the Philippines



MFM: Global Issues and Development

- Focused on humanitarian assistance in response to typhoons and earthquakes

OGM: Asia Pacific Branch

- Priorities for the bilateral program included enhancing local governance capacity, sustainable economic growth and children and youth
- Canada-Asia Trade and Investment for Growth Program (TRIGR) supported regional economic development, including support for small and medium enterprises and improved infrastructure

KFM: Partnerships for Development Innovation

- Priorities included sexual and reproductive rights and services for women and girls, sustainable economic growth, and governance capacity, typically as part of larger multi-country projects

IFM: International Security

- Priorities included strengthening national response capabilities for disease outbreaks, government capacity to combat human smuggling, and local law enforcement