

# Planned Relocation in the Context of Climate Change: Experience from the Field

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# The Politics of Planned Relocation

Toolbox is “particularly relevant to situation where there is time to plan and on planned relocation as a proactive measure to respond to risks created by disasters and environmental change.” Toolbox, p. 4

Challenges to engaging in proactive relocation:

- Limited amount of climate risk information available to local governments & local communities;
- Limited funding or alternative land available for planned relocation, even where need is recognized;
- Those most vulnerable to climate change effects and displacement, and therefore in need of planned relocation, are often the poorest and most disenfranchised; and
- Often people don't *want* to move.

# 2013 Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines



## **2013 Typhoon Haiyan –**

- **Local governments well aware of hazard risks *before* disaster**
- **4 million people displaced**
- **Primarily coastal communities who lacked secure land rights**
- **Govt institutes relocation plan for 200,000 households (1 million people)**

## **Relocation plans adopted by government ran into obstacles including:**

- **Lack of suitable, available land for relocation**
  - **Lack of sufficient funding**
  - **Lack of legal & institutional framework for relocation**
- **Result:**
- **Protracted displacement of vulnerable HH in camps, bunkhouses**
  - **Only small % of households relocated**
  - **Relocated HH experience loss of livelihoods, access to social services, social networks**
  - **Most people went right back and more vulnerable than before; risk of recurrent displacement**



## 2015 Flooding and Landslides in Myanmar

## **2015 Floods & Landslides –**

- **Affected 9 million people primarily in Rakhine and Chin States**
- **Areas affected extremely poor & vulnerable**
- **Humanitarian response to disaster insufficient**
- **Inability of houses to recover (e.g., increased poverty; indebtedness)**

## **Relocations:**

- **Collapse of river banks and landslides resulted in permanent displacement**
- **Govt, with support of intl agencies, relocates communities**
- **Ran into same challenges: lack of land, funding, legal frameworks**

## ➤ **Result:**

- **Protracted displacement of vulnerable HHs awaiting relocation**
- **Mixed results in terms of sustainability**
- **Likely migration over long term**

Outcomes:

- People moved to remote locations
- Lacked access to livelihoods/services
- New sites often more dangerous
- Poorer than before
- No consultation/participation of communities





## Takeaways:

- Post-disaster relocation largely unsuccessful
- Prolonged displacement
- Secondary displacement
- Protection issues unaddressed (e.g., evictions)
- People left more vulnerable than before



# Lessons Moving Forward

## ***National Governments:***

- ***Insufficient focus on preventing/mitigating conditions likely to bring about displacement and threaten human rights.***
- Need to develop and implement human rights-based disaster management laws that focus on ***identifying & addressing climate displacement risk*** (e.g., hazard and vulnerability mapping; early warning; evacuations).
- Implement legal & institutional frameworks for planned relocation.

## ***International Humanitarian Agencies:***

- Need to understand/clarify their role in planned relocation.

## ***International Development Agencies:***

- More focus on **disaster recovery**.
- ***Integrate climate displacement risk into laws and development planning*** including DRM, land use planning, building codes, agriculture, climate change adaptation.

**Thank you!**

