

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



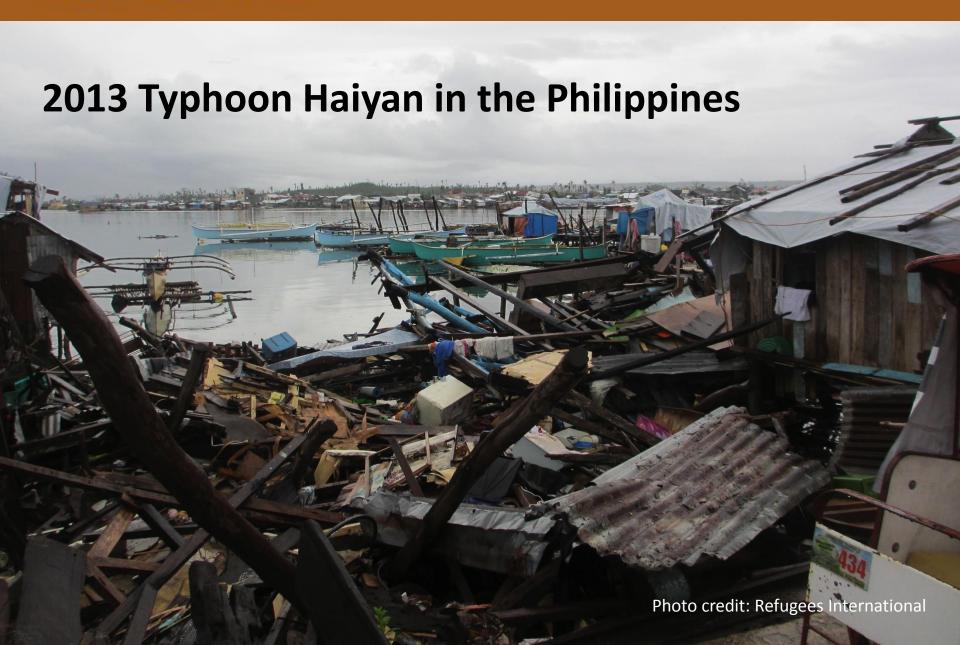


The Politics of Planned Relocation

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 –

- 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 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







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.

