

APPLICATION OF RESILIENCE FRAMEWORK TO COVID-19

RE-FRAMING OUR WORK



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Abstract

“We are all in this together but with differential disaster risk.”

Many would say that resilience is just a convenient buzz word used by development and humanitarian workers. But resilience is a framework and a tool determining the degree of risk. It describes measures to increase capacities and reduce hazard impact on people and element at risk to avert disaster.

“Disaster Risk Analysis” is a systematic process of consolidating the findings on a hazard, vulnerability, and capacity assessments to determine the risk levels for various elements at risk which are person, livelihood, infrastructures, ecosystem services, etc. The analysis contributes to the community’s awareness of potential COVID-19 risks for each element at risk and enables the community to define community action to reduce disaster risk. The “Resilience Framework” helps in understanding the interrelatedness of the capacities and guides the risk assessment. It is an essential precursor to decision-making in COVID-19 risk reduction, as well as the formulation of development policies, strategies, plans (development and contingency), programs, and projects.

Resilience is hazard-specific!

Resilience is people and element at risk specific!

Resilience is space-specific!

Resilience is time-specific!

Resilience requires specific attention which can be realized by the application of the “Resilience Framework”!



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APPLICATION OF RESILIENCE FRAMEWORK TO COVID-19: RE-FRAMING OUR WORK

By Rustico “Rusty” Biñas

Introduction

This paper supports the paradigm shift from disaster management to enhancing resilience in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic. It builds upon the Resilience Framework outlined in the publication [The Resilience Paradigm: Facts for Transformation](#)¹ and elaborates its use during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Conceptual Understanding: Disaster and Resilience

COVID-19 pandemic reminds us to shift from a reactive approach to being proactive towards resilience. Disaster, as commonly defined, “is a serious disruption, occurring over a relatively short time, of the functioning of a community or a society involving widespread human, material, economic or environmental loss and impacts, which exceeds the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its resources”². It can only be called disaster when the affected community cannot cope. *Resilience means the individual at risk is surviving and bouncing back from a hazard event and, with corresponding responsive transformative systems and structures in place within the community that has a supporting role in addressing the unfolding event and returning to normal and better functioning in society.*³

The higher the individual and community capacity means the lesser the risk. The lesser the risk, the probability of the hazard event turning into a disaster is lesser. Therefore, a community may be considered resilient. This concept is the core idea of DRR and enhancing resilience.

Resilience: Voices of Individual and Collective Strength

The following voices are shared from a context in the Philippine:

1. Addressing Basic Needs of an Element at Risk: Essential for Resilience Building

My daily grind spells out the need for food, water, clothing, shelter, among others. Even during floods, typhoons, or pandemics, these basic needs sustain my existence. The lack or the absence of this basic needs weakens my mind and body. Hence, this fears me and may lead to inability to cope with upcoming hardships. To be able to bounce back entails the strengthening of livelihood and health. Access to food, clothing, and shelter very much depends on the status of livelihoods. Productivity depends on our well-being. A steady livelihood means earnings and savings from diversified income sources in farming, gardening, employment, entrepreneurial business, among others. The power of the pocket can rebuild our lives immediately to normal functioning.



¹ https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/60860_resilienceparadigmrustybias2018.pdf

² <https://www.ifrc.org/what-disaster>

³ <https://www.preventionweb.net/understanding-disaster-risk/key-concepts/resilience>



Access to proper nutrition, water, medicine, sanitation, psychosocial activities, livable shelter, etc., is my requirement to sustain life. Ensuring that I am healthy and away from virus infections through social distancing, wearing a mask, hygiene, etc., increases my survivability. A stable income and savings can sustain me and my family until the return to normalcy or to a new normal. This capacity that I can carry out is an integral part of the community where I belong.



The individual, the community, and the local government, ideally, should have converged for a risk assessment, even before the COVID-19 pandemic. Such assessment covers data gathering and analysis aimed to prevent and/or mitigate any hazards. Understanding capacities of the individuals and community leads to identification of gaps, determination of the degree of risk, and formulation of plans to survive and bounce back.

2. Building Resilient Livelihood: A Capacity to Bounce Back Easily

The lockdown due to the COVID-19 outbreak put many of our activities largely on hold. Implementing restrictions on movement is the decisionmakers' way to mitigate the spread of the virus. The safety of our people is of highest priority, most especially the medical frontliners as the nation's first line of defense. Mobility of the other classifications of the working sector became a constraint. Livelihood curbed a growing distress as an element at risk. As it all happened in the Philippines, the almost three months (i.e., mid-March to end of June 2020) of lockdown or enhanced community quarantine policy by the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF), brought about unemployment and no income scenarios to the Filipinos. Livelihood, as an element at risk, was separately assessed in finding solutions during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In any community, different people engaged in different kinds of livelihood. Livelihood means one's access to resources and utilization of his or her capability to use each knowledge and skills for subsistence. The relationship of livelihood of the individual members of a community vis-à-vis hazard varies from each other.

Risk assessment and analysis of livelihood for each member of the community necessitates capacity building to survive and bounce back for any eventuality. For sure, there might be commonalities of requirements within the community during the lockdown. This may include the following support services such as developing skills, medical veterinary services, crop insurance, credit access for sustaining subsistence, supplies of seed, farm tools, and other inputs, etc.

A resilient livelihood such as job permanency with benefits, planting flood-resistant crops, drought-tolerant crops, multiple sources of livelihood, diversified ecosystem-based livelihood—integrated farming with crops, animals, and tree—ensures the carrying capacity of a system capable of regaining back to provide support and subsistence during and after the face of the hazard. It guarantees the individual household to bounce back from any hazard events. This is



one of the capacities that ensure food security, a form of savings, and buying power to address individual or community needs to go back to normal functioning. Thus, giving attention to and securing livelihood is an important element in building resilient communities.

3. Building Resilient Well-Being: Health is Wealth

As every country tackles the COVID-19 health crisis, the wisdom brings back the mind to human well-being. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) defined human well-being as the “people’s ability to live a life they value and compromise cultural change, health, access to land and natural resources as well as more material factors such as income-generating opportunities”⁴. It is paramount to saying that safeguarding the overall health and safety of a nation is the mutual grounding to remain productive.

Pre-pandemic, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals⁵ reported that major progress was made for Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages. It campaigned to fully eradicate a wide range of diseases and address many different persistent and emerging health issues, by focusing on providing more efficient funding of health systems, improved sanitation and hygiene, and increased access to physicians.

The World Health Organization (WHO) enumerated the most urgent global health challenges for 2020. Number 3: Making healthcare fairer talks about the growing gap between the haves and the have-nots in terms of access to healthcare. People in wealthy nations can expect to live 18 years longer than poorer nations. Wealth can very well determine access to healthcare within countries.⁶ For instance the Philippine government implements the Universal Health Care Act (Republic Act No. 11223) which aims for better health outcomes with no disparity among population groups, financial risk protection for all especially the poor, and a responsive health system for Filipinos to feel respected, valued, and empowered.⁷

The abovementioned global and local health goals are all but work in progress. The rapid spread of COVID-19 and all government responses around the world are tracked through key data and trends, epidemiological updates, technical guidance, public advisories, interactive timelines, among others. In the DRR circumstances, individuals and community are in a spectrum of understanding, knowing, building capacities and resiliency, finding resources to implement plans and courses of action, striving to gain leverage with governments in order to participate in the quest for human well-being amidst COVID-19.

Not all of us may be the same with such thing as index of life satisfaction, sense of purpose, and ability to manage stress situating human well-being. Well-being, in simple day to day, can also be a state of mind or merely a feeling of being well. Right now, we can only hold on to the universality of health and well-being as a human right. Re-focusing our individual mindsets to a common metrics for human well-being amidst COVID-19 can redirect our efforts to collective courses of action to build resiliency.

⁴ <https://www.iucn.org/commissions/commission-environmental-economic-and-social-policy/our-work/human-wellbeing-and-sustainable-livelihoods>

⁵ <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/health/>

⁶ <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/02/who-healthcare-challenges-2020s-climate-conflict-epidemics/>

⁷ <https://doh.gov.ph/sites/default/files/publications/2021-Budget-Briefer.pdf>



Mental Well-Being Matters

I woke up early and excited to prepare for tables, and chairs ensuring that there is social distancing with our neighbors during our breakfast after more than 50 days that we have not seen each other because of a lockdown. At first the heys, and hellos were very awkward, since we don't know where to start after a long time that we have not seen nor talked to each other. But as our breakfast commenced, automatically the discussion kicked in naturally on how we are coping with our Enhanced Community Quarantine. Experience sharing from our day-to-day routine exercise, work, relaxation, who is buying groceries, and supplies, reflections, and more realizations. Our discussion went from our day-to-day life to politics, and how this pandemic affects each one's life especially the wage-earners, business sectors, farmers, and homeless. Our sharing of ideas is overflowing and bursting in unison. Loud laughter, typical to our previous breakfasts before the pandemic, now is being heard again after a long time. We did not notice that time passes so fast, as we eagerly shared our thoughts and feelings. The laughter continued from breakfast to lunch. Indeed, our simple gathering with our neighbors gave us a sense of relief, coping effectively with the pandemic, and creating satisfying solidarity and relationships as one community. Our sharing of ideas ventilates our human emotions and the burst of laughter comforted us, an assurance that we are fine and ready to face tomorrow's sunrise.



4. Building Resilient Communities: Sustainable Ecosystem Services

An ecosystem is a community of interacting organisms and their physical environment. The symbiosis between humans, animal and the environment happen in livelihood patterns and human activities. Land use change as mentioned by Everard et al. (2020)⁸ had been linked to the 31% of outbreaks in emerging infectious diseases studied by EcoHealth Alliance in 2019. Many of our ecosystem services had dwindled due to land clearing, resource extractions, over-consumption, changes in climate, dumping of toxic wastes, and other threats. These result to stresses in life forms, migration even vanishing of species, humans prey on animals, etc.. The loss of biodiversity proceeds at an irreversible rate which posed risk at humanity's life support system (Diaz, et al. 2006 as mentioned by Everard, et al. 2020)⁹.

Ecosystem services such as trees for our oxygen, water quality and quantity, air quality, food, clothing, shelter, fodder for cows, etc. comprised our capacity support directly link to livelihood and health. The ecosystem helps sustain our survivability and bouncing back from this COVID-19 or any hazards. The ecosystem services are vital to sustaining our well-being, economic and social development. The state of our survivability and bouncing back are closely linked to the condition of our ecosystem. The condition now of our ecosystem is the reflection of our system and structures which regulate our very life support system.

⁸ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1462901120306122?via%3Dihub>.

⁹ *Ibid.*



5. Transformative System and Structure: Supports Individual Survivability and Bouncing Back

The communities' effective role as learning agents lies at the core of every effective resilience endeavor. It requires a learning process for collective understanding such as how COVID-19 spreads, how to avoid it, how to strengthen our immune system, how to safeguard ourselves, etc. Communities' collective learning of their disaster risk will prompt them to pro-actively offer risk reduction solutions. They will be enforcing the law rather than law enforcers do it. Such animosity against people and law enforcers can be avoided because people will take charge of themselves.

Strengthening or establishing the role and responsibility of each member vis-a-vis the community disaster risk reduction tasks is putting the systems and structures in place. This is known as the "functional" community organization. It is forming a cohesive decision-making community to ensure ownership of COVID-19 or disaster risk reduction processes, projects, challenges, and benefits.

Members of the community are made to understand, engage, and decide for changes. They own the problem, likewise, own the solution to disaster risk reduction measures. The individuals in the community, the most at-risk members, are the targets of disaster risk reduction initiatives. Members of the community need to own their disaster risk assessment results and the solutions they identified.

6. Building Resilient Communities: Enabling Policy Environment

Communities are not homogeneous. They are a dynamic mix of individuals and different groups of interests and attitudes, involves the sharing of something in common that gives a certain sense of belonging for each other. The existing power structures, decision-making processes, values, and beliefs are realities where these individual community members possess various capacities for resource access.

Therefore, building community resilience means enabling individual members of the community at risk to survive and bounce back as they participate as key players in community organizations. They need to work together to increase their capacity to address the root causes of disaster risk such as inequity, inaccessibility to resources, and the low level of knowledge and education. Likewise, aiming to put forward and assert for the right to a healthy environment and participation in decision-making towards determining, resolving, and attaining resilience. This can be exemplified in a university town in Los Baños, Philippines where students were locked down in the campus. The students were already running low on finances and in fear of their health and safety. The local community, responded to the needs of the students by mounting daily feeding programs, paying for restaurant food deliveries, organizing relief efforts, and initiating to transport them safely back to their hometowns. Moreover, this community, also helped the jeepney drivers and other daily wage earners negatively affected by the lockdown. They organized donation drives for drivers and their families, as well as the other less privileged residents. This Los Baños community looked out for the collective wellbeing of everyone with recognition that a burdened public healthcare system will impact on the health of individuals and families. In the end, the community collective recognized the problem and the provision of basic needs as solution is the call to action they opted in order to address the disaster risk. It is altogether bouncing back.



This community response illustrated above can be supported by an enabling policy environment by the Los Baños local government. As the Oxford Handbook on Public Policy emphasized, “ruling is an assertion of the will, an attempt to exercise control, to shape the world. Public policies are instruments of this ambition”¹⁰.

Policy development aids the government to ensure the safety of its citizen to collectively win the war against COVID-19. In the example of the Philippines, the “Bayanihan” To Heal as One Act (Republic Act No. 11469) was enacted in March 2020 declaring the existence of a national emergency arising from the Coronavirus disease 2019 situation. The law authorizes President Rodrigo R. Duterte for a limited period, subject to restrictions, to exercise powers necessary and proper to carry out the declared national policy. The creation of the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases through Executive Order No. 168, Series of 2014 recognizes the need for an intersectoral collaboration to establish preparedness and to ensure efficient government response to assess, monitor, contain, control and prevent any potential epidemic in the Philippines.

The action arena for COVID-19 policies is the Local Government Units (LGUs). The LGUs are in the forefront of the implementation of COVID-19 code alert system, health protocols, stringent social distancing measures, discretions in ensuring students to stay at home, at the onset. More importantly, in coordination with the Philippine National Police (PNP) and Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), in ensuring effective and orderly implementation.

The evolution of our day to day in the COVID-19 era captured policy making as partly a story about constraints and also about a story of change. But on the powerful play their interests, we are at the mercy of their decisions. Unless the people’s power uproars and paves the way for the global order.

During the initial 2020 lockdown or Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ), some community members trooped the social media channels and demanded from their local governments to act upon mitigation measures and support local industries. Youth groups called for direct procurement from farmers whose products were not transported and deteriorated. Some LGUs developed guidelines on how local agricultural harvests can be sold, utilized, and consumed within the ECQ areas in order to prevent rotting and thereby helped farmers in their livelihood. This was the case in the Laguna Province, which later was replicated in other local government units and expanded to other production sectors. Aside from the usual canned goods and kilos of rice in the “ayuda” packs distributed in households during the EQC times, live chickens were given too.

An enabling policy and government practice that upholds community initiatives can serve as support to community systems and structures to ensure that the individual element at risk is safe and able to bounce back and actively participate in community COVID-19 risk reduction initiatives.

Dealing with the policy and governance issues in the pandemic, essentially requires foresight and ideas. The 2020 problems and solutions undertaken to survive COVID-19 is already part of the historical process where we can take reference to foresee an alternative future and likely consequences of different policy interventions. A holistic view for a grand policy thinking on

¹⁰ <https://books.google.com.ph/books?id=MyccCgBfKaMC&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q&f=false>



access to immunization, adequate and nutritional food intake, clean water, clothing, shelter, sanitation, and hygiene, along with the abundant ecosystem services, healthy environment, and livelihoods is the way to bouncing back from COVID-19.

Understanding Resilience Framework: The Vertical and Horizontal Connection

The center of gravity of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), Climate Change Adaptation (CCA), and Ecosystem Management and Restoration are all for the benefit of human survival towards increasing capacities to bounce back and reach the end state of resilience. Thus, the Resilience Framework (Figure 1) illustrates how the human element at risk increases or decreases his/her disaster risk when one ingredient is missing or insufficient.

The metaphor of the lightning cloud represents hazards such as COVID-19, typhoons, floods, landslides, biodiversity loss, environmental destruction, or even lack or no access to potable water. Even before the hazard strikes, elements at risk have interlocking capacities that strengthen their foundation of safety and empower them to shape their community organizations to actively take responsibility towards the most at-risk members of the community. Hierarchical and dynamic interlocking capacities illustrate how the individual and the community can become resilient.

As illustrated, the human at risk, shown at the topmost part of the ladder, is the subject. The subject determines the hazard and acts to prevent and mitigate it. During "normal" times or before the hazard event, an individual enjoys rights such as immunization, food, water, and clothing, shelter as the foundation of safety, along with ecosystem services for survival, a healthy environment, and livelihoods. If the element at risk is enjoying these rights, his/her foundation of safety against a hazard is stronger.

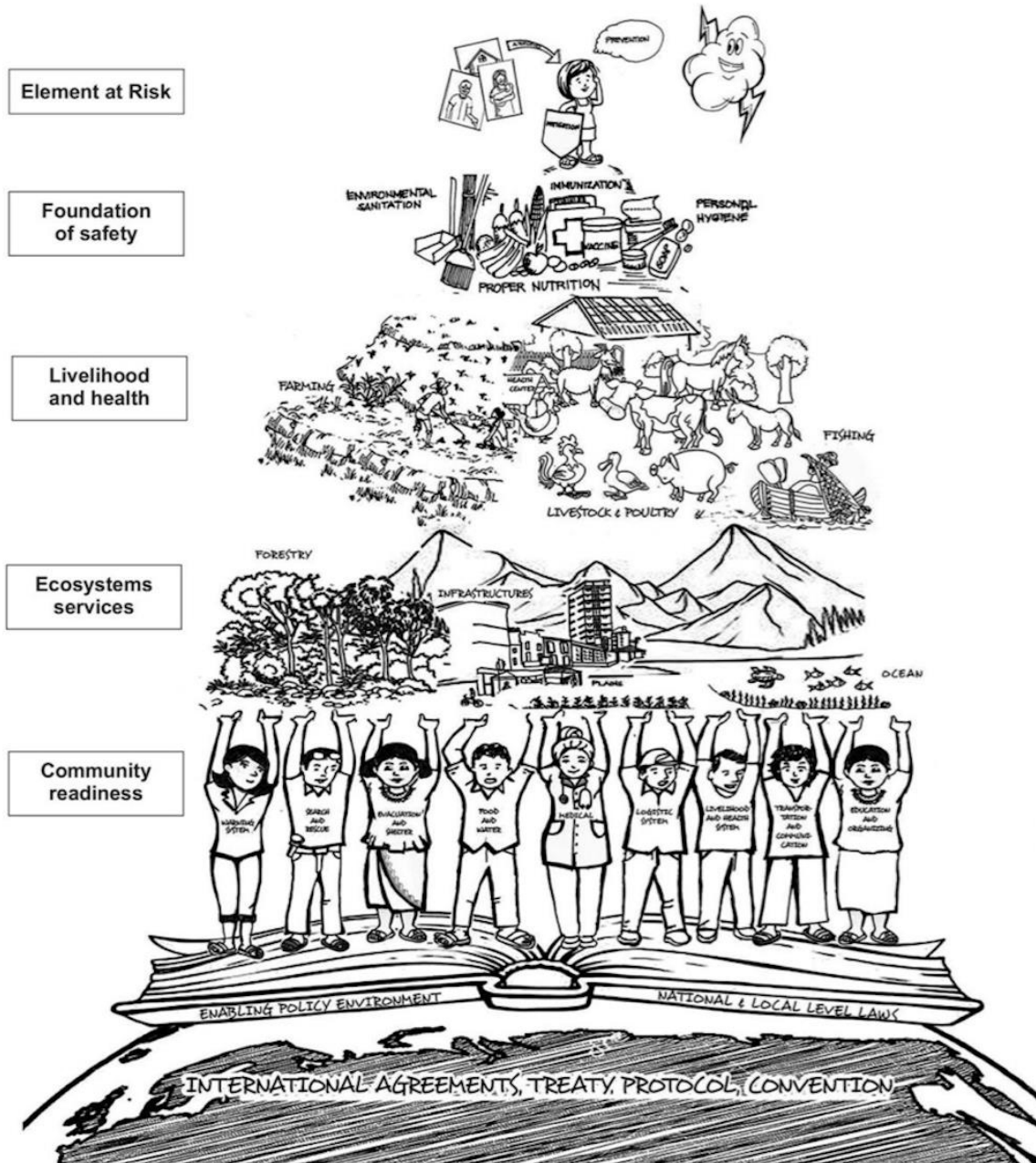
The thought bubble and the shield in the hand of the person at risk show that the she/he is trying to address hazard prevention and mitigation.

Ensuring that the person at-risk is resilient, the following is necessary: (i) the hazard-specific foundation of safety (basic needs for survival); (ii) livelihood and health (bouncing back); (iii) ecosystem services; (iv) community readiness; (v) enabling policy environment and global platforms such as treaties, agreements, and protocols. These are the systems and structures, both vertical and horizontal, that needs transformation.



Figure 1: Resilience Framework.

Resilience Framework¹



2013. Resilience Framework
By Rustico "Rusty" Binas Global Advisor on Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience Building

Table 1: Key Elements of a Resilient Framework.

Elements	Thematic representation	Element at risk specific measures	Hazard specific Measures	
Element/person at risk	The subject	Center of unit of Analysis	Prevention	Mitigation
Foundation of safety	Survivability	First level capacity support: Food, water, sanitation and hygiene, clothing, shelter...		
Livelihood and health realm	Bouncing back	Second level capacity support: ecosystem based livelihood, healthy living for a strong labor force...		
Ecosystem services	Supports Survivability and bouncing back	Third level capacity support: water quality and quantity, air quality, food, clothing materials, shelter materials, fodder for cows...		
Community readiness	Systems and structures that help individual element at risk to survive and bounce back	Fourth level capacity support: early warning, evacuation, search and rescue, Prepositioned food and water supplies medical services and supplies, transportation and communication, coordination and governance, security, community health workers trained in first aid, ecosystem management and restoration...		
Enabling policy environment	Ensuring human security	Fifth level capacity support: Local Governance Rules and Regulations, Customary Laws...		
International treaties, protocols, call for actions	Global order	Sixth level capacity support: aligned and non-aligned agreements ...		

The Application of Resilience Framework in the COVID-19 Pandemic

1. COVID-19 Risk Assessment and Analysis

COVID-19 is a hazard that affects everyone in the community. The virus may affect people differently due to varying exposure and varying capacity. For example in a community composed of men ages 18-60, what is each one's vulnerability of being exposed to the virus and the capacity each possesses? Therefore, there is a need to determine the degree of disaster risk of a specific element/person at risk.

Disaster risk assessment is a process that enables the people in the community to identify and analyze their degree of disaster risk. The process will bring out the following: 1) the capacity needed to address the characteristics of the hazard and 2) the capacity needed to address the degree of vulnerability of an element at risk. The result of the risk assessment and analysis becomes the baseline information for resilience.

The virus is spreading fast and nobody can tell who will be infected. Some exhibit the symptoms, others are asymptomatic. To mitigate the spread, we wear a mask, shield, and/or protective gears. We become mindful of personal hygiene like washing of hands, disinfection with alcohol or hand sanitizers. These actions to reduce exposure to the virus is called **MITIGATION**. More so, the human body can increase its defense from the virus through vaccines. Vaccines prompt the immune system to respond to the virus.¹¹ This is the **PREVENTION** aspect in order control the virus. ***Both mitigation and prevention measures are capacities that address the COVID-19 as a hazard.***

While working on prevention and mitigation, keep in mind that **survivability, bouncing back, and responsive support system** are equally important to achieve. To build capacity is to strengthen the immune system through addressing the basic needs such as proper nutrition, personal hygiene, environmental sanitation, immunization, early diagnosis and treatment, access to resources, enhanced livelihood, environmental protection, etc. Furthermore, to protect basic rights and equitably address basic needs, is to strengthen collective capacity by putting in place the system and structures. ***Individual strength and collective strength are inseparable capacities to ensure our survivability and bouncing back.*** With varying capacities and collective strength possibly not in place, an assessment will help determine the degree of risk. Infection may happen, yet individual and collective capacity is strong, then COVID-19 risk is low.

Disaster Risk Analysis is a systematic process of consolidating the findings on the hazard, vulnerability, and capacity assessments to determine the risk levels for various elements at risk. It contributes to the community's awareness of potential COVID-19 risks for each element at risk. Assessing each element at risk such as human, livelihood, infrastructures, ecosystem services, etc. enables the community to define community action to reduce disaster risk. **The Resilience Framework helps in understanding the interrelatedness of the capacities and guides the risk assessment.** It is an essential precursor to decision-making in COVID-19 risk reduction, as well as the formulation of development policies, strategies, plans (development and contingency), programs, and projects.

¹¹ World Health Organization. 2020. How do vaccines work. Accessed on 21 July 2021 at <https://www.who.int/news-room/feature-stories/detail/how-do-vaccines-work>



An overall assessment based on the consolidated results of the hazard, vulnerability, and capacity assessments: (i) Degree of risk determined; and (ii) Number of priority element/s at risk identified. The more the number of elements at risk with capacity gaps, coupled with more capacity gaps in community readiness, the higher their risk. When the number of most at-risk members of the community across sections of different degrees of vulnerability is determined, formulating the development and contingency plan can happen. Table 2: Risk Assessment Summary Report is a tool to capture the gathered risk assessment information.

Table 2: Risk Assessment Summary Report.

Element -at-Risk _____ Resilient Features: Guide for Risk Assessment and Analysis for Action¹

Hazard COVID 19

Element-at-Risk (Specific Age bracket and Sex)	Resilient Features	Assessment and Analysis for Disaster Risk Reduction			Number/ Units of Element at Risk which are *			Translating gaps to Objectives (Recommendation)
		Required Capacity	Existing Capacity	Capacity Gaps	H risk	M risk	L risk	
					Gaps	Gaps	Gaps	
Address human survivability, bouncing back and Governance								
___ Person Under Monitoring	Survivability	e.g., Food Medicine Water ...						
	Bouncing Back	Cash Livelihood...						
___ Person Under Observation	Systems and Structures	e.g., Coordination Transportation Communication Quarantine Area Medical Teams Medical Logistics and Supplies etc.						
___ Infected								
___ Not Infected								
Addressing Covid 19								
	Transmission	e.g., Disinfectant Vaccination						

* H-high, M-medium, L- low



Disaster Risk Mapping

In the Philippines, as COVID-19 continue to spike, typhoons regularly come and hard flooding follows. During the typhoon season, many communities remained trying to cope with the hazard unto another along with dwindling resources because of the lockdown.

It reminds the state of people after one of the strongest tropical storms of the century hit the Philippines, named Haiyan (Yolanda), in 2013. We had a successful recovery effort with CBCP-NASSA/Caritas Philippines, approaching the community to build back better through bottom-up planning. The initiatives are to plan recovery with the people through participatory disaster risk mapping. The disaster risk mapping is a starting point for the community to discuss among themselves who will be the priority beneficiaries of the program since each of them were affected differently. They have different coping capacity due to their socio-cultural and political makeup. The disaster risk mapping is very helpful that it can also be applied in any hazards like COVID-19. The community could use risk maps for contact tracing, distribution of food packs, provision of Social Amelioration Fund, movement of the people, etc.



2. Building Resilience Indicators

Resilience indicators emanates from developing the resilience objectives based on the risk assessment results (Table 3). This will serve as monitoring and evaluation baseline and tool.

Community members translate their risk assessment and analysis results (capacity gaps) into their COVID-19 risk reduction measures (community development plan and contingency plan). The community should be able to translate the gaps into objectives and activities. Likewise, output, outcome, and impact indicators should be defined as basis for their monitoring, evaluation and learning.

Table 3: Resilience Matrix.

Resilience Objectives	Activities	Outputs	Outcome	Impact
Hazard prevention				Hazard prevented
Hazard mitigation				Hazard impact reduced
Survivability -before hazard				Individual resilience
-during hazard				Individual survived and bounced back
Community readiness -before hazard				Community systems and structures function and made the community resilient
-during the hazard				Community saved more lives and reduced losses

3. Resilience Measures

Resilience objectives are derived from risk assessment results. Community members translate their disaster risk assessment and analysis results (capacity gaps) into their disaster risk reduction measures (community development plan and contingency plan).

a. Development Plan

The community development plan is a list of activities/interventions that are identified to be implemented before the hazard event. The objective of the development plan is to strengthen and increase the capacities of the community towards resilience to the COVID-19. This could include livelihood, health and education activities or setting up systems and structures to prepare before the hazard event.

b. Contingency Plan

The Contingency Plan is a list of activities/interventions implemented during the hazard event. It provides the community with a guide on what operational needs and actions are necessary to manage the hazards and the element at risk during the event so that the situation will not turn into a disaster. The objective of the contingency plan is for community systems and structures to save more lives and reduce the damage. Thus, both development plan and contingency plan are task functions that become the basis of measuring the progress of their implementation.

The decision on lifting the enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) to general community quarantine (GCQ) is based on what?

Effective action during the unfolding pandemic requires timely response and decision-making with accurate information feedback from stricken areas. This series of actions is the heart of the contingency plan. A contingency plan is defined as a process, in anticipation of potential crises, of developing strategies, arrangements, and procedures to address the humanitarian needs of those adversely affected by crises (Choularton, 2007).

A contingency plan guides the action of a community in response to COVID-19. It is tailor-made to a specific hazard. It is precisely according to the anticipated unfolding needs of the community during and the aftermath of the outbreak. The plan is activated by the community when the warning sign is visible that the outbreak is impending. It is a plan executed by community members with installed systems and structures. Clear protocols are established to effectively and efficiently function along with readily available resources in order to respond to the immediate and long-term needs of the survivors.

In a contingency plan, the command and control committee should be able to use the right information from the affected areas to effectively and efficiently respond. In COVID-19, such critical information includes the number of high, medium, and low risk for a specific element at risk segregated in relevant demographic characteristics like age, gender, location, identified comorbidities, etc. What is the actual need of the varying degree of risks and the actual need of the responders? The baseline and real-time information are available for decision-making purposes.



Primarily, the community is crucial in analyzing their condition and immediate needs. Key players in various levels like community members, local leaders, committees, task force, local organizations, and the like are the first responders and decision-makers. They are playing a significant role in carrying out actions such as lifting of the ECQ, distribution of food packs, provision of transportation, etc. to save more lives, and livelihood, etc.

Do we have a contingency plan? Where does the decision-making reside and what can be the basis? Who decides? Whose decision counts? Are we at the mercy of the decisions made?

4. Community Organizations: The Dignity to Decide and Shape their Initiatives

As COVID-19 rages on, stories such as of Juan who resides in a remote mountain community are common. It is interesting how communities are understanding the pandemic and putting together any available options to safeguard their well-being. Juan said that a group of people from the city came and started to camp out in his backyard at that time of lockdown. The community members learned about the city people in Juan's backyard and started talking to each other on what to do. They decided to report the situation to the municipal police station. The police officer in-charge explained to the group that it is the barangay (smallest political unit in the Philippines) that has jurisdiction over the concern. They were informed that the barangay is the first-level local government unit that implements the rules of ECQ. The group informed the barangay captain, who in turn acted upon the role and proceeded to Juan's place. Quarantine rules were explained to Juan and the visiting campers. The campers who are planning to stay a little bit longer, willingly packed up and left the area.

Listening to Juan on how the community took a stand and address the issue is inspiring. It strengthens a belief that when people understand the imminent danger, they organize themselves, communicate with each other, seek ideas, and unite for the chosen courses of action. Somebody leads, others follow. They plan, coordinate, list options, choose, reflect, and act as one to live better lives in safer and resilient communities.

The ECQ rules have driven a particular behavior that differentiates a community member from a non-community member. The geographical boundaries from one barangay to another distinguishes one's rightful location. When these city campers crossed their geographical boundaries, they were identified as outsiders of Juan's community in the mountains. Juan's neighbors and other community members acted protective of their community. The ECQ rules organized them to be vigilant on who comes in and goes out of their community.

A community becoming organized in this experience is shaped by the individuals' common objective of protecting each other from the entry of virus in their community which may be carried and transmitted by any infected individual/s. With the limitation of entry by non-members of their community, they become in solidarity with such emergency response. More importantly, the action is in compliance to the quarantine rules.

In the early days of participatory development, community organizations are the main vehicles of change. Promoting community self-organization is the only approach when the state does not have the resources to assume its responsibilities regarding human basic needs and socio-economic development (Bessette, 2004). Government agencies, private sector's corporate social responsibility



departments, corporate foundations, non-government organizations, and international development aid agencies work with these community organizations to achieve development goals. Community organizations are key stakeholders in community-managed development efforts. They eventually learned and were able to identify their needs, develop plans, plot logframes, represent themselves in the local sectoral boards, and further organize themselves in federations.

In the Philippines, the quarantine regulations in this pandemic era could have been an enabling environment in Juan's community. The active participation of community organizations in the governance aspects of the barangays is a venue for altogether understanding the various ways of interpreting and operationalizing the allowed and disallowed, the dos and don'ts, the negotiables and non-negotiables, the coverage and restrictions of any designated quarantine level. Juan himself, his neighbors, other community members, the barangay officials, even the city campers/visitors can jointly agree on rapid responses in managing and ensuring compliance with quarantine rules in guarding everyone's safety.

5. Consideration for Resilience Framework Application

a. Time Specific: The Indefinite Continued Progress of Existence

When COVID-19 happened in December 2019 and the pandemic was declared in March 2020, how did resilience happen to the countries of the world? How does the developing, emerging, and low-income countries respond and bounce back? How does the Philippines build capacities from the few cases up to the 1.53 million cases as of 23 July 2021? How are our communities now that a Delta variant has evolved? Human transmission of the virus is not stopping. The virus adapts variant after variant.

Resilience is time-specific. Relative capacities to cope in the progressing existence of the virus have to be dynamic. The World Bank in its series of Governance Blogs shared that COVID-19 actions necessitate both public health measures and cushioning the economic effects on households and firms.

Since March 2020, the Philippine mass media and social media channels cover almost every press briefing of the Duterte administration regarding status of COVID-19 cases, deaths, recovered, and all helpful news about it. Timely information is key. In any community nationwide, everyone has been watching TV and listening to the radio, reading newspapers, and browsing the social media to monitor the following: (i) spikes in cases and its location, (ii) quarantine level monthly status; (iii) hospital capacities and new isolation facilities; (iv) vaccination plan and administration by LGUs; (v) financial assistance second or third wave; etc. Resilience spells out being in the know so that the appropriate mitigation measures are executed. As public administration continues to function, the community actively provides citizen feedback and sentiments.

The bottom-line of handling time-specific resilience in a COVID-19 pandemic world is ensuring a healthy individual and community. Strengthening the individual immune system calls for eating nutritious food, practicing personal hygiene, nurturing physical, mental, and spiritual well-being, keeping a clean environment, and getting vaccinated. To achieve this, a farmer, a fisherfolk, an Overseas Filipino Worker (OFW), a nurse, a businesswoman, a jeepney driver, a bank executive, and every citizen will always depend on a sustainable or diversified livelihood. Having such



stimulus or the lack of it, in a certain extent, establishes his or her capacity to withstand and persist the continuing dangers of the invisible enemy.

Food packs became the typical relief drive to neighborhoods whose day to day sustenance depends on any work or income-generating activity at hand. Financial assistance was given three times last year to constituents who made it into the list. Permanent or contractual employees were able to access the Social Security System (SSS) of an amount equivalent to the months in lockdown status. In 2021, response evolved into a different scenario. “Ayuda” (food packs) distribution was lessened. A lockdown or ECQ in the National Capital Region (NCR) happened in March until April because of a surge in cases of 5,000 to 6,000 a day which strained hospital accommodation of infected patients.

This differential risk at a specific time can be translated into indicators which can be addressed by the government’s emergency response and eventually post coronavirus future. The crisis put speed and timely response at center stage in developing measures for COVID-19 risk reduction. Several literature all over the world wide web (WWW) have pictured and stories told that the multiple shocks that communities have endured greatly affect how governments manage their economies and deliver services. As modeled by the more resilient governments, successful COVID-19 responses require collective action by decisive institutional actors.

b. Hazard Specific: Beating Our Enemy

You may be resilient to flood but not to drought or COVID-19. Resilience is hazard-specific. It should not be assumed or oversimplified. COVID-19 as a hazard needs characterization by understanding its behavior determined the following: (i) cause or origin; (ii) force; (iii) warning signs and signals; (iv) forewarning; (v) speed of onset; (vi) frequency; (vii) period of occurrence; and (viii) duration. These are essential information that can help visualize the imminent danger. Data gathering is aided by technology. The internet is an open access resource in which one gains the knowledge, develop the skills, and shape our attitudes to adapt and cope with life under COVID-19 pandemic. Understanding the characteristics of COVID-19, helps individuals devise a plan on how to address them. The COVID-19 pandemic is continuing. Elimination of the virus is impossible at the moment.

Trace-Test-Treat. Some people, when infected, exhibit the identified symptoms (i.e., fever, cough, colds, loss of smell and/or taste, diarrhea). Others are asymptomatic. For more than a year of the pandemic, the LGUs through their Rural Health Units (RHU) have testing kits already at hand. Likewise, private hospitals in the municipalities also have the capacity to undertake testing for persons under investigation (PUI). Isolation while waiting for results of the confirmatory tests for PUI is a default. Coordination at the barangay level among the residents and the Barangay Health Emergency Response Teams (BHERTs) had been established. By some means, the Philippines was able to move together in expanding efforts to improve the systems and structure at the community level to better match supply and demand.

COVID-19 human transmission mitigation measures remains constant with the enforcement of social distancing, wearing of mask and face shield, age mobility restriction, curfew, etc. The Philippine government’s efforts for lives to be safer is through getting everyone vaccinated. Broader coordination is being undertaken through the spirit of cooperation at the regional level to acquire the vaccines.



Strengthening the very foundation of safety through a responsive support system help us be more resilient from COVID-19. Building resilience through hazard-specific strategies entails the formulation of development and contingency plans encompassing all the hazards disturbed, disturbing, and will disturb the community. Lately, communities are faced with multi-hazards. The community and the local government need combined efforts to work on their plans for each hazard based on a hazard-risk assessment and analysis process.

c. Element at Risk Specific: Differential Risk

Based on the concept of differential risk to survive and bounce back from the COVID-19 pandemic, the capacity requirement differs within a community. In the context of disaster risk reduction and resilience building, the subject of discussion is called the element at risk. An element at risk can be any of the following: (i) individual human being (segregated in ages and sexes) for Department of Health (DOH) and Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD); (ii) critical facilities or infrastructure such as roads, bridges for Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH); (iii) water system, crops, trees, or livestock for the Department of Agriculture (DA); (iv) wild animals, ecosystem, biodiversity, or livelihood for the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR); and (v) systems and structures for the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG). Each of the aforementioned government agency, may select one at the time an element at risk as focal point for risk assessment and analysis in order to develop a clear resilience plan.

Risk analysis concerns the available capacity of the individual or community. One can be of low level of risk when there is a high capacity to survive and bounce back having a support system in place. Individual capacities are determined by his or her innate natural resistance and healthy physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being. This is possible with access to proper nutrition, excellent hygiene, good shelter, decision-making, values, beliefs, supportive system and structure. The high degree of vulnerability is not equal to high-risk because the determinant to conclude the degree of risk is the capacity of a specific element at risk.

Each element at risk is facing multi-hazards. Each hazard requires specific capacities to achieve resiliency. Hence, the preferential option is for those most at-risk. The above process provides resilience baselines. It is a big challenge for the government agencies at the national level and the LGUs to gather on-site and timely data on the number of people at risk given a particular hazard. It is the who they are, where they are, how many they are along with the other demographic details that can feed into the database which can be the basis for development and contingency plans. Likewise, the source list for the government's social amelioration fund, food packs, even livelihood enhancement programs, for the recovery plans post-pandemic.

d. Location Specific: Knowing Where We are Requires Different Sets of Capacities

A person with a disability, women, old people, or children are not necessarily highly vulnerable to any hazard. We should be clear that their degree of vulnerability depends on their proximity to the hazard. Any of the aforementioned classification of people in the community, depending on their demographic characteristics, may be physically far from the COVID-19 infected individuals. Based on contact tracing, if one has did not come near to the area where infected individual/s is or are located, then this means that vulnerability is low. Proximity to the COVID-19 infected



individual as a contact tracing unit of measurement means varying degree of vulnerability. Vulnerability is the degree of "exposure of the Element at Risk" to the hazard, determined by proximity/distance. In the case of COVID-19, the infected human being is the epicenter. The further you are in the identified infected your vulnerability is less.

Social distancing has been a default in every kind of mobility and space that anyone gets into. This measure helps reduce the transmission of and exposure to the virus. Lockdown restricts mobility, thereby, to counter the surge. The prohibitions impede the OFWs or relatives abroad from coming home because of fear that they might encounter the virus as they travel and may bring the virus to their destination. Migration or crossing geographical borders becomes a concern too. Survivability may bring one's decision to move out of their original location to avoid and be safe away from the high incidence of infection. For humanitarian reasons, this option for survivability is hoped to be addressed.

The "degree of vulnerability" may be high, but does not necessarily mean there is high risk because the determinant is our capacity. The degree of vulnerability is properly assessed by looking at element at risk and its degree of risk whether high, medium, or low. There are varying capacity requirements for each degree of vulnerability of a specific element at risk. The bottom line is the difference in capacities among individuals that concludes the differential risk among us. Access to these resources by the people at risk and the overarching system and structures determines our degree of risk to a specific hazard.



Insights and Conclusions: From Concept to Our Reality

1. Looming Needs

With quarantine policies as mitigation measure, the impacts of COVID-19 in our communities vary. People are losing their jobs, hence, no income to buy food. When livelihood has been compromised, capacities are drained. The overall well-being is confronted with stress. This becomes a day to day battle creating significant effects on the social, cultural, economic, and political affairs of our communities. Individuals who are the most at risk suffer the most. These people are ultimately the first to be hit. They are the ones who require more attention.

The lack of survivability from the COVID-19, will render the individual more exposed to disaster risk. Those who lack capacities on how to handle and act on their risk are usually the ones who will be gravely affected. The lack of or ineffective and inefficient support system would further aggravate the situation. Often these are the poorest of the poor in our communities.

Conversely, there are well-to-do members in the community. Charitable practices was fostered as the pandemic basic needs circumstances evolved. There are kind-hearted individuals who collectively addressed these looming needs within and across various communities.

We are all in this together but with differential disaster risk.

2. Creating Opportunities and Possibilities

As to Juan's story, he survived the COVID-19 lockdown in that community in the mountains with the food shared to him by his neighbors. The community was equally vigilant to enforce the ECQ rules of no visitors allowed through sending off the campers to return to their city of origin. How are the restrictions happening elsewhere?

Uncertainty is more of our daily grind in this pandemic era. We need to continue to survive by addressing our basic needs such as food, clothing, health care, clean water, clean and healthy, environment, and diversify our livelihood options for us to bounce back easily. We need responsive systems and structures are in place to support our needs and security. How far can we go?

As we continue to face a new reality, creating opportunities and possibilities is our way forward. Maximizing our available space and supporting local community initiatives ensures survival by increasing productivity.

The limited mobility of the workers coming from the nearby provinces for their jobs in the NCR created a window of opportunity to adapt to jobs in the barangays, municipalities, and provinces like the Grab, Food Panda, and Toktok food delivery services. The same with online shopping delivery services of Lazada, Shopee, and other retail online merchants. Jobs were created in the communities.

Neighborhood consumers are likewise supportive to small and medium enterprises like local food shops, artisans' crafts and services, "talipapa" (small market in the barangays), hair trimming home-services, backyard farming, etc. This an act of solidarity with efforts to adapt to the pandemic equally



and boosting the local economy. Relocalization is an emergent trend during this pandemic. It is as a form of building resilience and economic recovery. Even in urban centers, public spaces are utilized for urban gardening. Households practiced recycling of containers for planting vegetables like tomatoes, eggplants, and okra for family consumption to survive lockdowns. A number of city dwellers ride their bikes to work. This helps reduce transportation cost, ensure social distancing, promote good health, and many other various reasons. In turn, the emergent bike movement spurred the growth of local bike shops for selling and repair services. With the increased demand in face masks and personal protective equipments (PPEs), local sewers shift to sewing these essential goods rather than ready-to-wears (RTWs). These associated enterprises help boost the local economy and provide for opportunities for daily wage earners.

In rural communities, forest and marine resources are venues for hunting and gathering food. Local dwellers are likewise limited by the laws and regulations on land and sea use. New laws, programs, and projects to help the agricultural sector in land and aquatic reforms is a window of opportunity for the stakeholders to start brainstorming on in relation to sustainable livelihoods post-pandemic.

In the medium term, industries and services in the urban centers can also make its parallel operations in the nearby provinces like in the CAABARZON areas and other potential growth centers in Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. Work opportunities in the rural areas can fuel up growth in the local economy. With export and import restrictions, the local artisans were tapped in the mass production of face masks and protective gears. The emergence of motorcycle delivery services in specific zones for take-out foods, online shopping, document deliveries, etc. All these changes are ways to adapt to the new norm. It forms part of re-building a resilient system by supporting livelihoods within our immediate community.

Make use of our available time and resources during the lockdown. People started to indulge in gardening, do it yourself crafts, upcycling old clothes or gadgets. Some blogged stories to inspire others. Most of us enjoyed the bonding with our family members whom we see every day. Routine exercises were finally given time. We chose to eat healthier food this time, no fast foods. House repairs were attended to. Most importantly, our minds and hearts are nurtured with moments of reflection, meditation, prayers, and silence. These are all forms of building our own resilience as we cope with the pandemic.

The policy is an integral part of the new normal to ensure that the development process contributes to COVID-19 risk reduction or any impending hazards. While development work targets the community members at risk, policy work should identify what needs to be changed or implemented to improve the safety and resilience of the most at risk. It also means institutionalizing emergent practices that ensures safety and resilience.

3. Underpinnings of Resilience

RESILIENCE is a framework and also a tool that determines the degree of risk. It describes measures to increase capacities and reduce hazard impact on the element at risk to avert disaster. Many would say that resilience is just a convenient buzz word used by development and humanitarian workers.

Resilience is hazard-specific. Hence, a resilience plan which is composed of development and contingency plans should be specific to hazard. Since our communities are facing multi-hazards,



therefore, our communities should have multiple specific resilience plans. A DEVELOPMENT PLAN is implemented before the hazard strikes. It is internal capacity strengthening to insulate each element at risks such as human, livelihood, well-being, infrastructure, ecosystem, and system and structures from any impending hazard. When a hazard strikes, for example, COVID-19, the internal capacity of individuals and the community systems and structures are mobilized to address the unfolding need of the outbreak. This is what we call the CONTINGENCY PLAN. It is systems and structures in place to help save lives and reduce the damage to properties and or infrastructure. If the contingency plan is non-existent then we are doomed for disaster. If it is in place but insufficient then the hazard would turn into a disaster. In this case, the community declares a disaster, and welcome or seek external help to address their immediate and recovery needs.

Resilience is an element at risk specific. The same age and sex groupings in one community there are different degrees of resilience which is also known as a differential risk due to the underlying causes of the socio-economic-political and cultural makeup of an individual. The preferential option is for those most at risk be it in humanitarian aid or development work.

Resilience is space-specific. The assessment should be done in a specific context. A species that migrates to find his/her niche in other places for survival and to bounce back from imminent danger such as COVID-19, typhoons, floods, civil conflicts should be supported. We are one family world.

Resilience is time-specific. It is dynamic. As long as we have enough capacity in place to address the impending danger, then we are ready to save lives and reduce the damage. As we continue updating the resilience baselines from disaster risk assessments and we are doing something to address the root causes of disaster risk, then we could say that resilience is no longer a hollow word because it has flesh and it can be measured from time to time.

4. Building Resilient Communities: Connecting the Dots

While the Philippines are facing the COVID-19 another typhoon hits the country, the beginning of the rainy season, and seasonal flu and dengue fever will surface, and this would further complicate and burden our public health system and our own families' anxiety because of the sign and symptoms are similar to COVID-19.

For sure capacities are draining, but individually one need to continue to strengthen immune system through addressing our basic needs such as mental, physical and spiritual well-being like proper nutrition, personal hygiene, environmental sanitation, immunization, early diagnosis and treatment, access to resources, enhance our livelihood, environmental protection, observe social distancing, wearing a mask all the time, etc. Because of differential disaster risk, thus, each one would have a different coping capacity due to socio-economic-cultural and political makeup, but need to create opportunities and possibilities to address these challenges.

To protect basic rights and equitably address basic needs is to strengthen collective capacity by putting in place the system and structures to have a greater voice. There is no dignity in just waiting at the mercy of a philanthropist and civil society organizations to address survivability needs. They just come and go; people need a lasting solution. A critical mass is needed for governments to function better and provide a solution to the underlying causes of disaster risk, which are unemployment, poverty, multiple hazards, illiteracy, and civic inertia.



5. Building Resilient Communities: Respect Self-Determination

After the rain, the plants will continue growing, the birds will continue tweeting, the water will continue flowing. Adjustment is a natural occurrence. While people are grappling with COVID-19, plus the tropical storm that hit the country, people will continue our tempo of life.

Maybe resources are draining, anxiety is creeping, but people will continue rhythm of life. People will continue to eat, whatever, available food we have. People will make use of our existing water for drinking. Perhaps during the period of adjustments, people may get sick, but they will continue pace of life. Dignity is intact. Spirit is soaring. Although hardships continue to loom around, people will continue to hold on to survive.

If support systems function better, then it would ease up decision-making. It would help to progress and participate better in the affairs of one's community for the common good.

I myself am not the mere subject of development. I am the reason of my development. I am in control. I decide. I plan for my desired goal. I execute my plan and measure if I am getting nearer to the objective of my existence. This is the logic for all people.

If my Government and other Civil Society Organizations follow my mental map towards my development, then they will be able to support me towards the realization of my resilience aspirations with pride and dignity. After all, the sun rises every day!

Humanity Prevails: The Spirit of Resilience

Amidst the COVID-19, all of us have many stories to tell, as we continue to journey in our life. Allow me to share the story of my friend, let's hide his real name, and let us call him Juan. I know him for more than 20 years through ups and downs and still find ourselves and treated each other as family. Juan has undergone so many pains in his life, but whatever his past, we believe that one day he will find his path, and we continuously stand by him, and his journey becomes our journey too.

December 2019, after many years, Juan showed up in our doorstep. To start anew, we brought him to our remote place in the forest we called it home away from home with a few houses at least more than 500 meters apart. It is a home with no electricity, but good enough to be away from the buzz and bustling city. Juan agreed to stay there, and with some food, he is now ready for his discernment. As COVID-19 progress to lockdown, our mobility at one point limited, and some point impossible, so we lost touch with Juan. He has no phone, and visiting him is impossible. We are so worried since we knew that his provision of food is not enough, and he is alone.

Meanwhile, here in the busy city, some people are living in fear. They even came up with several scenarios such as their security for their insecurity, lots of assumptions about the people that probably when people run out of food they will ransack, loot, etc., and even debating not to accept incoming people from elsewhere because they might bring the virus. Some people even organize themselves to mobilize resources for the provision of food packs to be distributed in case of a mob. Also, there are individuals and organizations that work silently as a support system to many communities who treat people with respect and dignity.

After seven weeks, we visited Juan, as the status of Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) was modified to General Community Quarantine (GCQ). GCQ allowed us to travel across other municipalities. We were happy to see him doing well. We asked him, how did you survive? He told us that from time to time, all his neighbors are checking on him. If his food provisions are inadequate, they provided him and even welcomed him to their homes for meals. His neighborhood are small farmers, cultivating gardens or rice averaging half a hectare to one hectare. But their hearts are worth more than a thousand hectares or even priceless. You may be old, or an infant or a person with a disability but if your support system is strong then you are not high risk. Resilience, therefore, is an individual strength inseparable with collective strength. Both are an integral part of the whole.

Often I doubted our people, I thought they are less in life, but actually, I am less in life. It is inspiring to feel the love and compassion of the people for Juan. Our life gets better if we treat people the way we want to be treated.



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