

CHRISTIAN AID PHILIPPINE PROGRAMME COUNTRY PROGRAMME STRATEGY PLAN 2013-2018

JUSTICE AND RESILIENCE

1. Mission Statement

The Christian Aid Philippine Programme shall advance justice and resilience to address persistent poverty and inequality aggravated by disaster and climate risks amidst relative economic growth and political stability.

2. Context and Development Rationale

2.1. History of Christian Aid in the Philippines

Christian Aid began development assistance in the Philippines in the late 1970s from its London office by working with the projects department of the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP). This was followed by relationships with the human rights organization Task Force Detainees (TFD) and the faith-based organization National Secretariat for Social Action (NASSA) of the Catholic Church both challenging the repressive martial rule of then President Marcos.

By the mid-1980s and as democracy returned, Christian Aid programming expanded to agrarian issues, child victims of militarization and other themes. In the early 1990s however, serious ideological rifts within the progressive movement of which many Christian Aid partners aligned (or unaligned) reached a vicious state such that organizations were being torn apart causing set backs on sectoral reforms.¹ Issues relating to accountability of some older partners also became apparent and important questioning arose as to whether the forms of organising under an oppressive regime continued to be appropriate.

In 1996, ten years after the People Power Revolution toppled the Marcos dictatorship, a Country Programme Strategy Plan (CPSP) was developed for the Philippines and new partnerships were forged. At this time, partnerships in the north of the country were phased out with a shift to officially identified poverty regions and provinces of Bicol, Eastern Visayas, and Mindanao regions. The next CPSP covered the period of 2002-2007 and addressed a variety of thematic and sectoral concerns. It was followed by the recently reviewed 2007-2012 plan where programme focus was on urban poverty, mining and its impact on indigenous peoples and rural poor communities, disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change adaptation (CCA), challenging macroeconomic policies keeping people poor and humanitarian response.

2.2. The Development Context of the Philippines

After years of relative stagnation, the Philippine economy had enjoyed expansion in the past decade, buoyed by internal growth and sustained transfers by an estimated 1.2 million overseas Filipino workers. This growth, however, is consumption rather than production driven, and has fallen short in generating investments that can create sufficient employment to absorb the increase in the labor force and the rising population. It has also fuelled inflationary pressures, making it more difficult for the poor to afford essential goods and services. With insufficient investment, the burden shifts to

¹ Indigenous peoples rights, agrarian reform, rural development, urban poverty, migrant workers, natural resource management, health, local governance, etc.

the public sector to increase revenues and spending to sustain growth and continue the delivery of basic services.

As in many emerging economies around the world, the benefits of this growth are captured by the elite residing in the country's major cities. Three-fourths of the GDP increase of USD17 billion in the first quarter of 2012 went into the coffers of the forty (40) richest families in the country. During the same period, half of all Filipino families rated themselves poor and reported experiencing hunger of varying severity. In 2009, the Gini coefficient stood at 0.448¹, the highest in South East Asia after Brunei and Myanmar.

Despite advances in human rights legislation, women's economic status continues to lag behind that of men. A large proportion of unpaid work continues to be done by women. Women more than men are likely to work in small and medium sized firms with no security of tenure, poor working conditions, and lack of social protection.

Poverty is high among those regions in the Philippines which are predominantly rural, vulnerable, disaster prone, and conflict affected – many of them in Mindanao. Ironically, Mindanao received the lowest budget among the three major island groups of the country although bilateral and multilateral government aid has tended to focus on Mindanao in the last decade. The poorest of the rural population are the indigenous peoples, fisherfolk, and farmers. In absolute terms, the largest numbers of poor are in the country's highly urbanized cities with many of them living in informal settlements along flood-prone areas. The country is rapidly urbanizing, with 63% of the population living in cities. This number is rising every year exceeding the national average of 2% increase per annum, thereby causing enormous stress on the carrying capacities and resources of urban areas. Twenty of the country's largest cities are along the coast and therefore susceptible to climate change impacts.

The Philippines is considered the third among the most vulnerable countries in the world to natural disasters and climate change.² 73.8% of the population live in disaster prone areas. Government estimates place the annual damage caused by reported disasters from 1990 to 2005 at PhP20 billion a year in constant 2005 prices.³ Established seasonal patterns such as southwest and northeast monsoon are displaying larger deviations from the standard. Rainfall is expected to increase in certain parts of the country while drought is projected in others. Sadly, against this backdrop of vulnerability, the country is ranked one of the least prepared to cope with natural disasters.

The façade of democracy cannot hide social injustice that still pervades Philippine society until the present. Accountability and governance remains weak and can be traced to elite capture of state institutions by those with economic and political power. Legislators with dynastic family origins constitute 68% of the current Congress. Recent studies show a strong correlation between political dynasties and high incidence of poverty (in provinces and districts where these political dynasties reside). These findings suggest that elite control of state resources have not resulted to poverty reduction. Even with the ascendancy of a reformist administration, the country continues to lag behind its major Southeast Asian neighbours in controlling corruption.

3. Programme Strategies

3.1. Programme Impact

Anchored on the global Christian Aid Strategic Framework, Partnership for Change (P4C), building on the gains of work carried out under the previous country strategy and taking advantage of relative

² World Disaster Report 2012

³ This is equivalent to USD 465.12 million or an average of 0.5% of GDP per year.

political stability, a reform-oriented Aquino administration, and different spaces opened for engaging in governance and policy dialogue, this programme will contribute to achieving justice and resilience for the poor in the country.

In the Philippines, changes will happen among (i) partner communities in priority urban and rural areas (ii) policies and structures at different levels of governance in the country. At the end of five years, communities served by Christian Aid and its partners are better able to self-organize; network at the local national, and international levels; initiate collective action to challenge and shift power imbalances that keep them poor; seize opportunities to increase their participation and obtain their just shares in the growing economy; sustainably manage their resources and natural disaster risks; and gain access and voice in decision-making shaping their lives. Tangible shifts in policies and practice in favour of the poor and marginalized will be demonstrated.

Regionally, the programme will contribute to strengthening a culture of learning across country programmes through knowledge sharing and collaboration in common areas of concerns (e.g., resilience, livelihoods, DRR, climate change, tax and economic justice).

3.2. How Change Will Happen

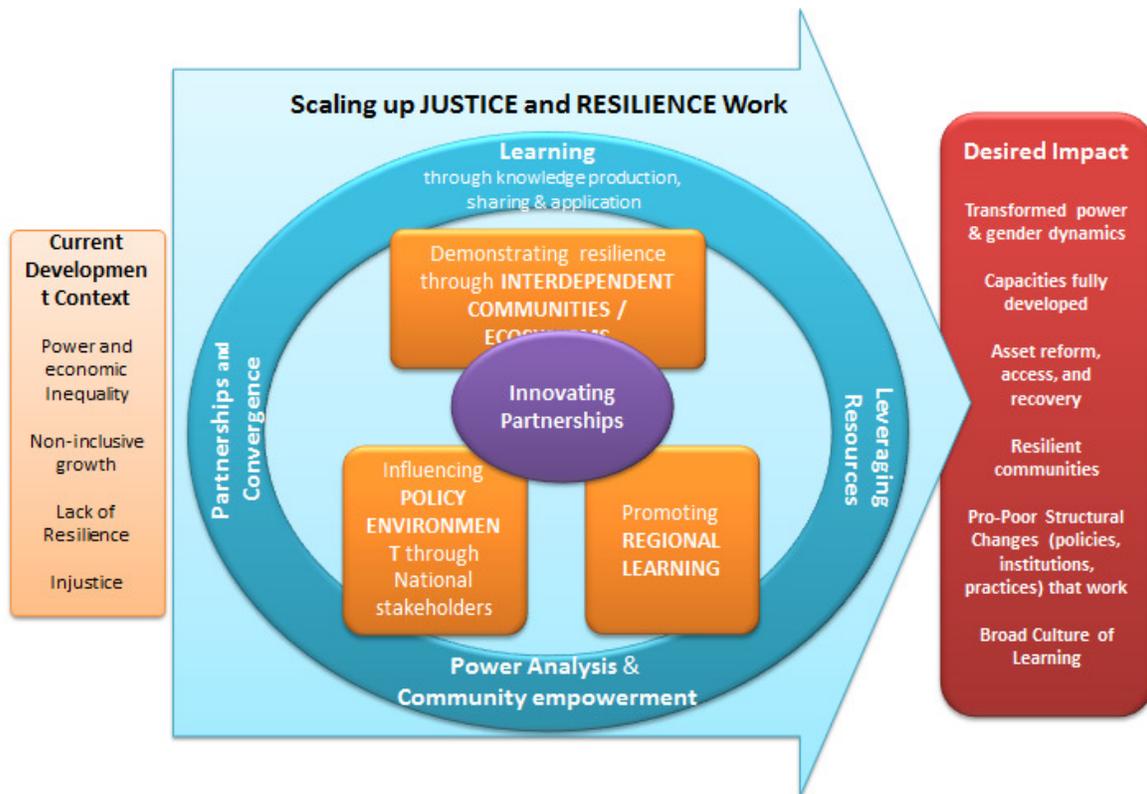
The country programme's mission statement aligns well with the three overarching organizational strategic goals of resilience, justice and opportunity for all outlined in P4C. The programme hopes to substantially contribute to achieving Strategic Change Objective 1 (Power to Change Institutions), 3 (Fair Shares in a Constrained World), 4 (Equity for All) and 2 (Right to Essential Services).

As illustrated, the process of change will be done by scaling up justice and resilience work at the local, national and regional level. These multi-level approaches are

1. informed by strong power analysis and driven by a fundamental aspiration of empowerment of the marginalized to serve as a strong foundation for transformative change;
2. built on partnerships of different stakeholders (e.g., allies in civil society, government, churches, academe, the scientific community, and the private sector) to stretch its sphere of influence;
3. designed to leverage resources and knowledge to magnify its sphere of practical impact; and
4. oriented towards learning to ensure adaptability and sustainability in a changing and uncertain reality.

Moreover, innovating partnerships underpins the bold ambition to scale up the work. Critically engaging different interest groups and non-traditional partners aims to explore new avenues of development work. The Country Programme rides on the crest of the favourable political environment in the Philippines and the different spaces opened for engaging in governance and policy dialogue over, among others, equitable access to essential services, natural resources and physical assets, bottom-up participatory planning and budgeting, tax reform and good governance.

At the local level, resilience is founded on organizing and consolidating interdependent poor communities (i.e., urban, rural, upland-lowland, disaster-affected). Community empowerment and engagement with various actors to make public institutions and the market work for the poor aim to demonstrate impact, transform power dynamics, and eventually expand reach. The impact from previous community-focused work in terms of tools, learning, and resources will be scaled up through linkages with social movements, national networks, and other communities. These networks, in turn, will work towards its integration in programming and policy dialogues at various levels and replication across geographical and sectoral (eg fisherfolk, farmers, indigenous peoples, urban poor etc) lines.



In the national and international level, influencing the policy environment will be realized by

- bridging grassroots concerns with national and global advocacies undertaken by social movements;
- assisting in scaling up these communities' efforts and successes by leveraging the organization's expertise, experience, and reach;
- linking community advocacies with the work of think tanks and national networks engaged in national and international policy dialogue; and
- supporting community engagement with various levels of government, the private sector, civil society, the academe, and different communities of practice.

This intermediary role of combining grassroots engagement with macro policy dialogue, each informing the other, has been found to be an effective way of promoting change in an archipelago such as the Philippines. Christian Aid's principal means in this effort are its credibility, expertise, convening power, and its history of engagement with organizations and individuals of various faiths, persuasions, and ideologies. It will strengthen existing partnerships in the ACT alliance and forge new ones with various organizations to expand reach and improve programming quality through exchanges and peer-learning.

Recognizing the current financing environment, it will access back donor funding, leverage its funds to access other sources, and facilitate the partners' access to these sources. It will be principled, at the same time, strategic in its choice of partners.

In the cross-country level, the country programme shall be active in facilitating regional learning and programming. Learning is facilitated by collaboration and knowledge production/re-production, sharing, and application. .

3.3. CA's Comparative Advantage

Over the past 40 years, the country programme and its partnerships have evolved with increasing relevance in the country and within Christian Aid's strategic directions. The DRR and CCA work is strong and impactful and is moving towards the fuller framework of resilience that Christian Aid envisions. The programme is credited to be a critical driver in the passage of the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (PDRRM) Act of 2010, supported the development of implementing rules and regulations for the Climate Change Act of 2009, developing the small islands DRR model and substantially contributing to the Climate Smart Disaster Risk Management model while ensuring linkage between macro-national level policy making and local realities. Christian Aid is among the very few organizations supporting fiscal policy reform especially on tax justice and pro-poor and participatory budgeting and the reform of the highly destructive mining policy. Its strong partnerships with the Aksyon Klima, Alyansa Tigil Mina, Building Disaster Resilient Communities Learning Circle (BDRC-LC), DRR Network (DRR Net) and a host of community level partners keep it at the cutting edge of the development arena and extending their advocacies and capacities to the region. Christian Aid works on urban poverty issues not only in the top three mega-cities but also in other highly urbanizing areas of the country. Promoting urban resilience, it works with the strongest partners like PHILSSA, CO-Multiversity, Socio-Pastoral Institute, TAO Pilipinas, FORGE, and MinLand to advocate beyond shelter, land tenure and other physical assets and include resilient livelihoods and climate smart DRR.

Similarly for macro-policy work, we will build on long time partnerships with well-recognized institutions like Action for Economic Reforms (AER) and Social Watch Philippines-Alternative Budget Initiative (SWP-ABI) and expand relations with equally capable small project fund partners like Jubilee South-Asia Pacific Movement on Debt and Development and Bantay Kita (Revenue Watch). They shall also be our spring board to regional partnerships given their regional stature and experience.

Though partners are not necessarily present or fully capacitated to respond across all disaster-prone provinces should major emergencies occur, the pro-active development and various joint collaborations of partners through the Christian Aid Rapid Response and Assessment Team (CARRAT), the various DRR capacitated communities and ongoing formation of the ACT Alliance Philippine Forum expands this reach and surge capacity significantly.

The ability to connect horizontally and vertically across local, national and international arena and issues makes the programme an effective convenor and facilitator of engagements between the government, scientific community, economic and policy think tanks, advocacy groups and grassroots.

Being at the forefront of resilience programming and macro policy, tax and economic justice advocacies while continuing to be a reflective and learning programme, the Philippine Programme is eager to proactively lead, support, share and learn with others beyond its borders.

3.4. Making Change Sustainable

Resilience and macro-policy change is at the core of the country's programme strategy because of work in these areas hold strong potential for sustainable change. Empowered communities when consolidated create the critical mass to continually challenge and inspire government and duty bearers. Establishing a culture of learning and ability to adapt will keep them at pace with ever changing environments and reduce risks that could erase hard-earned developmental gains. Building good examples of community resilience and documenting and disseminating them allow others to learn and improve their own resilience. Shifts in fiscal policies that increase revenues and pro-poor appropriations result to far-reaching positive impact for the poor. Advocacies for funding safe

settlements for the urban poor force government to direct their attention to this sector and their needs and correcting the practice of throwing informal settlers to just any available, mostly hazard-prone, land. The reform of the mining policy will not only address the injustices caused on poor rural communities especially indigenous peoples but brings forward other inequities resulting from unfair revenue sharing, tax dodging, poor environmental safeguards, disregard of hazards and the amplified disasters they bring to communities around mining areas. Policy changes have the potential to bring fundamental structural changes in the country.

Partner's sustainability will be supported as they are capacitated and connected to donors and government to access resources. The programme has over the years already organized partners to separately and collectively respond to call for proposals. The network partners are particularly better engaged with this given their wider reach and collective strength. Specific community focused partners have also established credibility and relations and with support will be well placed to access local government funding. The programme's relationship with particularly capable partners has and will be evolving to different engagements as they also redefine their organizational relevance, e.g. mentors to new and emerging partners, representation in international platforms, and secretariat/convenor for several partners who have united around specific agendas.

3.5. The Programme Objectives

The objectives of the Philippine Programme are:

1. Urban and Rural Resilience - Develop resilience by empowering men and women of vulnerable and high risk poor communities to self-organize, anticipate and reduce risks, respond to disasters, adapt to climate change impacts, learn, partner with stakeholders and fully participate in governance to address inequity and claim their rights to essential services with dignity. Particular emphasis will be provided for poor communities in different contexts:
 - a. Urban poor communities thrive amidst their rapidly growing economic and built-up physical environment;
 - b. Rural poor communities equitably and sustainably manage and benefit from natural resources;
 - c. Disaster affected communities gain access to timely and accountable needs-based humanitarian response.
2. Macro Policies to address inequities and resilience - Challenge and change national and international policies, structures, systems and practices to promote resilience, good governance and accountability for the poor, informed by national and local engagements.

4. Programme Outcomes and Approaches

4.1. Programme Partners and Participants

To achieve the objectives set out, the Philippine Programme will work with capable⁴ and accountable current and new local, national and regional partners, organizations, institutions and agencies who share our passion for social justice and equity, framework for resilience and commitment to create transformative change. These partners will include CSOs organizing rural and urban poor communities that provide support services to other CSOs, communities and even local governments, and are able to network with the larger rural or urban poor sector and allies. The national and regional partners shall be those that are able to influence relevant macro-policies with

⁴ Includes the following qualities: good organizational governance, leadership succession, analytical and strategic in approach and decision making, effective and efficient systems, gender sensitive.

grassroots level aspirations, effect local coordination of interdependent resilient communities, up-scale advocacy and vertical integration, and learning.

The parameters for selecting programme partners will be a balance of capacity to create lasting impact in specific vulnerable and high risk poor communities, testing strategies and approaches to generate learning, achieving scale and for national and regional partners, national or regional scale impact.

Humanitarian response will be carried out based on needs matched with partner capacities to respond.

While practice over the years has been working with and through **nongovernment organisations (NGOs)**, the country programme will be open to partnering with **people's organizations (POs)** as implementing and grantee partners should they meet the required systems and standards.

For humanitarian response, we will strive to work with our long-term development partners but may expand and explore other partnerships so that surge capacity is commensurate to the extent of disaster impact. In relation to this, and to the extent viable in development programming, we will exhaust all possibilities for working with the **ACT Alliance Philippine Forum** partners and will also explore synergies with existing consortium engagements, e.g. **DIPECHO consortium partners**, our strong alliance with the **Philippine INGO Network (PINGON)** and on a much broader scale, the **UN Humanitarian Country Team (UNHCT)** and local **civic organizations**.

The programme will continue to strengthen work in bringing together **peer organizations** and **INGOs** for joint assessments and analysis of issues, more complementation, rationalization of funding support across funding partners and overall solidarity. At a time where funding is becoming more constrained, this way of working will be relevant and will be continued in the Philippine programme operations. We will also seek to influence resource allocation by other funders to our thematic priorities so that frontline partners have access to more funding opportunities.

The programme will build on earlier successes and be more consistent in **resource matching and leveraging-based partnership with national and local governments** in pursuing common development objectives and programs. Opportunities with the **private sector** and **markets** will be studied and used to the extent appropriate in the country programme's development and humanitarian programming. With strides in linking the **scientific and academic community** with community knowledge to improve the programme's advocacies and program design, partnerships with them will be intensified.

Partnership negotiations will ensure leveraging. We will strive to create greater impact where our contribution is matched by partners' own contribution or is able to generate more resources, financial or otherwise.

4.2. Interventions and Outcomes

Interventions that will be supported to achieve the programme objectives and outcomes:

- **Empowerment and community organizing** that would specifically target vulnerable sectors or the community.
- **Capacity development** of poor communities and their development partners.
- **Macro and local policy development and advocacy** to realise access and right to services, resources and tenure and will involve campaigning, lobbying, rights-claiming, modelling, engaging in participatory governance.

- **Engaging the government for services and other resources** to facilitate sustained access to services and resources for the poor.
- **Livelihood strategies** that generate wealth for the poor and enhance their resilience.
- **Natural resource and environmental management** that is sustainable, just, equitable and pro-poor.
- **Learning and knowledge management** that will address the inequality in knowledge production, encourage a culture of learning by sharing of knowledge of the poor and social change actors to targeted stakeholders and knowledge application towards justice and pro-poor resilience building.
- **Research** that will provide evidence and promote pro-poor advocacy, community action, and multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary partnerships.
- **Partnering and networking** of actors within the community and the sector for solidarity building, collective action and learning and across different interests and disciplines, i.e. scientific and academe, ACT Alliance.

Expected outcomes borne out of the combination of interventions:

- Poor communities in high risk areas or informal settlements are able to organize themselves, identify impediments and opportunities for building resilience, access and analyze information necessary for them to develop plans, act on those plans and reflect on the outcomes of their actions.
- Partners and communities have developed capabilities (e.g., identifying and prioritizing needs and risks; responding to crises; critical partnering with other stakeholders; actively participating in local governance) that are necessary for building resilience and addressing inequity.
- Ground level work is strongly linked with and an important component of policy development and advocacy both in terms of providing evidence to support policy calls and strengthening the voice of the poor in shaping such policies.
- National policies, structures and practices ensure justice, equity and opportunities for communities to build resilience.
- Leveraging of resources is a developmental norm and able to draw in additional funding, expertise, critical mass for influencing and improved credibility towards the achievement of programme objectives.
- Just, pro-poor, participatory, risk-based and accountable governance at all levels and functions of governance.
- Pro-poor urban and rural livelihood and market activities and strategies are developed and creating additional income for the targeted programme participants.
- Natural resources essential for resilient livelihoods are prioritized for and effectively managed and controlled by marginalized communities.
- Approaches and technology for sustainable management of natural resources are promoted and supported by government and practiced by communities.
- Viable and safe settlements and durable housing where the urban poor are actively engaged in the processes of risk assessment, site selection, design and development (public infrastructure development, mobility and communications, utilities, health and sanitation).
- Protection and equitable use of urban commons – both natural and built-up (water, waterways, wastes, roads, dikes, walls, air, “open space”).
- Learning on achieving resilience and equity are continuously collected, organized and shared among partners, relevant stakeholders and to the broader Christian Aid resulting in improved performance capacity of CA and other social change agents where all are able to better understand the complexity of and strategies to address inequality.
- Substantial reduction of social conflict (e.g., domestic violence, clan wars) and children in conflict with the law.

- Disaster affected communities access timely and accountable needs based humanitarian response and introduced to DRR.

4.3. Multi-Interventions to Achieve the Change

To achieve the strategies and programme vision the Philippine Programme will use the different interventions together by:

- Integrating power analysis in understanding their context, where poor communities define options that are sensitive to risks and inequality and take actions that will promote social, economic and ecological justice.
- Developing resilient communities by building resilient livelihoods at the community level.
- Facilitating interdependent resilient communities with urban-rural links in targeted ecosystems or watersheds (Horizontal Integration).
- Facilitating knowledge, collective actions, advocacies, learning linkages at different levels (micro-meso/intermediate-macro) with multiple stakeholders, i.e. CSOs, government, scientists, service providers, church, media, private sector (Vertical Integration).
- Leveraging CA and local partner resources to scale-up impact.
- Enabling learning within communities, across partners, and across country programmes.
- Active sharing of learnings and best practices to influence change in policy and practice.
- Connecting grassroots and local government issues with the macro-national debate and policy decision making resulting in significant change national wide.

4.4. Programme Focus and Cohesion

Rural resilience work will prioritize the following geographic areas: Bicol, Caraga, Zamboanga Peninsula, Samar and specific high poverty/high risk provinces. The country programme will prioritize these areas but other considerations, notably availability of resources, presence and capacity of partners, and other relevant factors will determine actual work relationships and interventions.

The strategic urban priorities would be: a) Cities with a large magnitude of poverty and inequality (i.e., Greater Metro Manila, Metro Cebu); b) Seats of power in the prioritized geographic areas of Bicol, Caraga, Zamboanga Peninsula, Samar; c) Regional centers (i.e., Greater Metropolitan Manila, Metropolitan Cebu, Davao, Cagayan de Oro); and d) Areas for targeted learning (e.g., Peace Development in Pagadian City).

Though justice and resilience shall be the general theme of the country programme, micro-analysis that would employ Christian Aid analytical tools shall inform the specific interventions which will be bounded by particular themes in order to keep the overall portfolio cohesive and synergistic.

Across the region and in coordination with other country programmes, the Philippines intends to contribute significantly to cutting edge program deliberations and advocacies on economic justice, resilience, livelihoods and post-2015 Millennium Development Goals.