



Implementing Emergency Cash Transfers: The Philippine Experience in Response to the 2016/17 Disasters¹

Pablo Acosta
 Pam Palma
 Joedie Perez
 Rashiel Velarde

I. Background

Around the globe, there is an unending cycle of producing innovative policies that are relevant and responsive to today's complex problems of disaster risk reduction and mitigation. A lot of evidence is pointing to the shifting paradigm in responding to emergencies. Foremost among them is the growing acceptance of cash transfers as a response tool to disasters.

The Philippines is not oblivious to this developing paradigm. The Philippines is considered to have one of the most advanced social protection (SP) systems in the East Asia Pacific region. These SP systems are designed to help poor households manage risk and shocks. Currently, there are different types of cash transfers being used by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) programs.² These include: (1) the *Pantawid Pamilya*³ conditional cash transfer (CCT) program; (2) the Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP)⁴ using cash-for-work; and, (3) the National Community Driven Development program (NCDD)⁵. These programs use various modalities and mechanism for cash transfers in different stages of the post-disaster timeline. However, the SP element of DSWD's disaster risk management and response interventions can be significantly improved especially if to be used as a response tool during disasters.

¹ This report is prepared with the assistance from the World Bank Rapid Social Response for "Developing an Emergency Cash Transfer for Increased Household Resilience to Disasters in the Philippines." We thank the cooperation of DSWD officials in the elaboration of this note.

² DSWD is the leading agency in the country in response to disasters and emergencies.

³ *Pantawid Pamilya* from the term "*Pantawid Pamilya Pilipino Program*", which is what the Philippines' conditional cash transfer program is called. It is also called "4Ps" (DSWD. Accessed 16 Oct 2017).

⁴ This program is a community-based capacity building program which aims to equip participants to actively contribute to production and labor markets by looking at available resources and accessible markets. (GOVPH Official Gazette. Accessed 16 Oct 2017).

⁵ The World Bank (WB) defines NCDD as an approach that gives control over planning decisions and investment resources for local development projects to community groups with these five defining elements: (i) a community focus, (ii) participatory planning and design, (iii) community control of resources, (iv) community involvement in implementation, and (v) use of community-based participatory monitoring and evaluation to ensure downward accountability to the community (The World Bank. Accessed 16 Oct 2017).

The Philippine Social Protection Note series aims to disseminate experiences, good practices, and key findings from the Philippines on the topics related to social protection. It also aims to broaden the dialogue on social protection and stimulate public engagement in moving forward the policy agenda. The views expressed here are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the World Bank.



Ahead of future disasters, establishing a stand-alone or separate “Emergency Cash Transfer” (ECT) program is advisable to deliver post-disaster cash transfers to a larger share of affected households. The experience during Typhoon Yolanda has encouraged authorities to consider a disaster-responsive ECT program and to replace a share of in-kind assistance with cash provisions. This initiative is also consistent with the Philippines Development Plan (PDP) 2017-2022, Chapter 11 on Reducing Vulnerability of Individuals and Families to deal and cope with risks, which mandate that “protocols for emergency cash transfers, calamity loans, and livelihood programs will be established in areas most likely to be affected by disasters”.

II. Recent Cash Transfer Interventions in the Philippines

For several years now, DSWD has been introducing some form of cash transfers for emergency as part of their disaster response toolkit. The President Rodrigo Duterte administration continues to implement cash transfers through several programs, among others, one that addresses the grievance of survivors of super typhoon Yolanda (that took place in 2013), another to provide assistance to victims of typhoons Lawin and Nina, earthquake in Caraga Region, and to the internally displaced persons (IDPs) as a result of the armed conflict in Marawi City. Table 1 summarizes the instruments, beneficiaries, cash transfer modalities and the amount of cash assistance in the DSWD’s implementation of cash transfers in recent disasters.

Table 1. Summary of cash transfer implementation on the Five Major Disasters

Disaster	Number of Affected Families	Instrument	Beneficiaries	Cash Transfer Modalities	Amount of Cash Assistance
Yolanda	1,472, 251	P5,000 Presidential Financial Assistance (5KPFA)* Emergency Shelter Assistance (ESA)	Victims who did not receive shelter assistance	Combination of LBP cash cards and direct cash payouts	P1B total / P5K per beneficiary P10K for partially damage and P30K for totally damage
Lawin	432,279	Emergency Shelter Cash Assistance Project (ESCAP)	HHs with Totally and Partially damaged Houses	Combination of LBP cash cards and direct cash payouts	P10K for partially damage and P30K for totally damage
Nina	545,428	ESA CFW FFW	HHs with Totally and Partially damaged Houses	Direct cash and checks payouts	P3,787,060,000 total / P10K for partially damage and P30K for totally damaged
Caraga Earthquake	10,947	ESA FFW	HHs with Totally and Partially damaged Houses	Direct cash payouts	P26.9M total / P10K for partially damage and P30K for totally damaged
Armed Conflict in Marawi	74,981 families from 96 brgys of Marawi and 20 municipalities of Lanao del Sur (as of July 5, 2017)	Financial Assistance	IDPs of Marawi Crisis	Direct cash payouts	P5K per beneficiary

*This program is the focus of the study although there are other programs implemented in response to super typhoon Yolanda.

To date, the Emergency Shelter Assistance (ESA) is the most used instrument to respond to disasters. The damage to properties, especially damages on the houses of the most vulnerable sectors of the population, is always one of the outcomes of any natural disasters. It is for this reason that assistance for repairs of damage to houses is always part of the early recovery response of DSWD. The ESA (or the Emergency Shelter Cash Assistance Project, ESCAP, for the case of Typhoon Lawin) is a shelter assistance program implemented by the DSWD. The main difference though between the two is that assistance given through ESCAP is given only in cash, while ESA’s assistance maybe either through the provision of material or cash still to be used for the reconstruction of houses.

ESA/ESCAP is essentially a conditional cash transfer and it is also not a universal response tool for disaster. The purpose of ESA and ESCAP is to repair partially and totally damaged houses. The grant that was provided to them were specifically noted, as stated in the guideline, to be spent on materials for the repair and reconstruction of their houses. In a broader perspective, the limited use of ESA/ ESCAP to assist only on household reconstruction defeats the premise that a disaster victim knows best his road to recovery---that is both choice and personal. While repair of the damaged houses might be important to the early recovery of some households, others might be better off to live temporarily with relatives and use the cash instead to start or rebuild their livelihood. ESA/ESCAP is also not a universal response tool for disaster. The National Capital Region (NCR), which could also be a victim of a major disaster, has no ESA/ESCAP. Big fire on informal settlers communities, not super typhoons, is the most common disaster that hits NCR, and providing shelter assistance in the form of ESA/ ESCAP could equate to toleration of squatting.

The financial assistance from ESA/ESCAP is intended to be used only for repair and reconstruction of damaged houses. ESA has facilitated the early repairs of damaged houses. In Regions II, V, VIII, CAR and Caraga, where ESA was one of the instruments used, beneficiaries were monitored using the initial payment of P5,000 to buy construction materials. The full assistance, though usually delayed, was still used as intended; however, oftentimes it was used as payment for the loan the beneficiaries borrowed in buying construction materials.

There is no automatic trigger for DSWD to deploy ESA/ESCAP. The deployment of ESA/ESCAP is an executive decision triggered by an information-based Disaster Response Operations Monitoring and Information Center (DROMIC). However, the process to release ESA/ESCAP funds is only initiated upon the submission of the LGU of a proposal that contains a validated list of eligible beneficiaries. The process to access funds commences with the selection of potential beneficiaries and social preparations. The municipal social welfare and development officer (MSWDO) of the LGU administers the master list of eligible beneficiaries using the Disaster Assistance and Family Access Card (DAFAC), the field office of DSWD (DSWD-FO) does the analysis of the processed DAFAC and conducts an area visit to validate the list of families that was submitted by the LGU, with totally and partially damaged houses. Finally, the DSWD-FO together with the LGU-MSWDO, conducts orientation of the eligible beneficiaries on the procedures in the implementation of ESA/ ESCAP. The DSWD-FO shall then initiate the process of downloading of the funds from the Central Office, who is responsible for generating the required funds for the DSWD-FO. The DSWD-FO will then download the funds to the LGUs or to the assigned special disbursing officer (SDO) to directly deliver the assistance to eligible beneficiaries.

The Cash-For-Work (CFW) is the instrument usually used to complement the ESA/ ESCAP. It is a temporary employment assistance to distressed or displaced individuals by participating in or undertaking preparedness, mitigation, relief, rehabilitation or risk reduction projects in their communities or at evacuation centers. In the five cases studied, CFW was implemented as a component of ESA/ ESCAP, and was operationalized through the same memorandum circulars though with a separate and different amount of assistance.

The top-up cash assistance for Yolanda survivors – the P5,000 Presidential Financial Assistance (5KPFA) – was implemented only almost four years after the typhoon. The 5KPFA was a commitment made by President Rodrigo Duterte as a response to address the appeals of some 200,000 victims who have not received shelter assistance from the government or private donors. It is funded by the Socio-Civic Projects Fund of the Office of the President that will be transferred to the DSWD.

Meanwhile, the financial assistance for internally displaced population (IDPs) and families brought about by the **armed conflict in Marawi** was operationalized through the Memorandum Circular 10 series of 2017, dated June 1, with a total amount of Php235M coming from the Protective Services Program Fund. The cash assistance seeks to address the needs of growing numbers of IDPs and families in the evacuation centers, particularly the special needs of Muslim population in celebration of Eid al-Fitr.

The sections below described in more detail the cash transfer instruments used in the most recent natural and man-made disaster events in the Philippines.



II.1 Typhoon Yolanda

November 8, 2013, Super Typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan) made a landfall in Leyte and Samar provinces and left a massive devastation, killing 6,300 people (reported) and affecting more than 1.4 million families damaging more than 1,011,782 shelters in 171 municipalities of Regions IV-B, V, VI,VII,VIII and Caraga.⁶ It is the strongest typhoon in recorded history. Its powerful winds caused massive storm surges in the coastal areas, uprooted trees, tore down houses, bridges, and other structures, blown down power and communication lines. Its aftermath is catastrophic: dead bodies everywhere and debris of houses and buildings littered along main highways, roads, and bridges.

Typhoon Yolanda left great suffering on the lives of the affected population. Aside from life casualties, it left 493,912 families with partially damaged houses and 518,878 families with totally damaged houses. Gleaning from the extent and magnitude of devastations, vulnerabilities of families due to devastations of their dwelling units and sources of income increased tremendously. Although rescue and relief operations were underway as early as 9 November 2013, most places remained isolated and without aid for days due to impassable roads, widespread power outage, and damaged communication and transportation facilities.

Former President Benigno Aquino III declared a state of national calamity on 11 November 2013. All departments and other concerned government agencies initiated a rescue, relief, rehabilitation, and recovery work in accordance with pertinent government operational plans and directives. Alongside government efforts, local and international organizations and volunteers came together to extend assistance to the survivors of typhoon Yolanda and took part in what would be one of the greatest concerted relief and recovery efforts witnessed in recent history.

The government, through the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), crafted the Reconstruction Assistance on Yolanda – Build Back Better as the basis for its immediate interventions in the affected areas and to be a document to facilitate international donor assistance. Although it is designed to guide rapid action to address critical, immediate needs, it is also designed to aid in the development and implementation of a full set of recovery and reconstruction interventions over the medium-term.

In order to unify the efforts of government and other agencies involved in the rehabilitation and recovery of Yolanda-affected areas, former President Aquino appointed the Presidential Assistant for Rehabilitation and Recovery (PARR) who serves as the overall manager and coordinator of rehabilitation, recovery, and reconstruction efforts of government departments, agencies, and instrumentalities in the affected areas. The PARR initiated the formulation of Comprehensive Recovery and Rehabilitation Plan (CRRP) of the government based on the policy guidance.

Despite the comprehensive efforts of the government, including massive support of non-governmental organizations (NGO) and international donors, the overall recovery and rehabilitation in several Typhoon Yolanda affected areas have still a long way to go, particularly in the aspects of rebuilding shelters and infrastructure.

II.1.1 Emergency Shelter Assistance (ESA)

Six months after Yolanda, DSWD implemented ESA where beneficiaries received Php 10,000 and Php 30,000, in the form of cash or construction materials, for partially and totally damage houses respectively. Memorandum Circular 24 series of 2014 set the guidelines for the implementation of the ESA projects for families with partially and totally damaged houses.

To determine the selection of beneficiaries, regional office utilized the Disaster Assistance Family Access Card (DAFAC), list of municipalities, and number of affected families from the Office of the Presidential Assistant for Rehabilitation and Recovery. Much effort in identification of beneficiaries was processed at the LGU Level. They also considered those who are in below poverty threshold, no permanent source of income, and partially and totally damaged houses in identifying ESA beneficiaries.

⁶ Bowen (2016). "Typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan) and the case for building an "emergency cash transfer" program in the Philippines". Philippine Social Protection Note No. 10, World Bank.

Appropriateness on the amount of ESA per beneficiary was based on the revalidated reports on the damage in the house, whether it is partially or totally damaged. To monitor the impact of the intervention to the beneficiaries, local government units (LGUs) provided accomplishment report regarding the implementation. Observations regarding the project, areas of improvement, testimonies from the beneficiaries were included in the report. One of the hot issues of discussion during the actual field monitoring to some ESA beneficiaries is that the assistance did not reach the beneficiaries on time. There was political intervention at various level of governance specifically at the barangay and municipal/city level due to inclusion/exclusion issues.

In Yolanda, grievance was monitored from the receipt of complaint letter from the beneficiaries to the Office of the Ombudsman, Civil Service Commission, DILG, CHR, DSWD through eReklamo, Office of the President. Then, the Project Development Officers (PDOs) validate the said complain using the monitoring tool for validation for the implementation of the ESA for Typhoon “Yolanda” in coordination with the MSWDO or the concerned office. They interviewed the complainant with Barangay Chairman, neighbors and other involved parties so that PDOs can provide assessment and recommendation that are addressed to the Regional Director (RD). Regional Directors are to provide reports to concerned parties/agencies.

II.1.2 Presidential Financial Assistance (5KPFA)

During the third anniversary commemoration of Typhoon Yolanda, President Rodrigo Duterte addressed the appeal of some 200,000 victims in Region VI, VII, and VIII who have not received shelter assistance with a commitment of P5,000 assistance per affected household to be distributed through the DSWD. The objective was to provide the much-needed assistance to these families who have been denied of their rights and privileges.

DSWD issued Memorandum Circular 3 series of 2017 to set guidelines for the Presidential Assistance (5KPFA) for typhoon Yolanda affected households. The guidelines for its implementation, including the eligibility criteria for its intended beneficiaries, included the following: (1) the house of the household must have been damaged by typhoon Yolanda, irrespective of the extent of damage and ownership of the lot where the house is built, and (2) the household requested assistance from the DSWD on or before November 8, 2016, and must have been included in one of the lists submitted to the DSWD by People’s Organizations (POs) and Non-government Organizations (NGOs) on or before November 8, 2016; or have been included in one of the lists of unfunded ESA family-beneficiaries submitted on June 22, 2016 to the Department of Budget and Management (DBM); or have submitted, on or before November 8, 2016, a complaint to the DSWD of not having received assistance, which must have been confirmed and validated by the DSWD.

The DSWD Field Offices (FO) conducted validation and received the list from the prospective beneficiaries the documentary requirements. Each eligible household-beneficiary received the P5,000 assistance issued through a Land Bank of the Philippines cash cards or direct cash/check payout. The cash assistance was funded from the one billion pesos transferred to DSWD from the Socio-Civic Project Funds of the Office of the President.

The implementation of the 5KPFA encountered several challenges. The validation of eligible beneficiaries turned out very problematic due to technicalities. Many of the eligible beneficiaries had a hard time producing the required identification cards lost due to Yolanda. Others had a hard time getting residency certification, especially for those who seek refuge outside Yolanda affected areas for a time. It also became an issue that some of the original petitioners of the financial assistance failed to qualify based on the guidelines. Some municipal social welfare and development officer (MSWDO) were not willing to attest the validation of the beneficiaries since it is the POs and NGOs who are involved in the listing.

Peace and order or security has been another problem in the implementation. It is not easy to validate and provide the financial assistance to eligible beneficiaries in far-flung areas with peace and order problems. There is a huge security risk for the special disbursing officers (SDOs) carrying a large amount of cash. Finally, lack of SDO in conjunction with too many requirements to accomplish is the reason why after almost a year, the distribution of the 5KPFA cash is still not completed.



II.2 Typhoon Lawin

Typhoon Lawin (Haima) was the third most intense tropical cyclone worldwide in 2016, with maximum sustained winds of up to 225 kilometers per hour. Typhoon Lawin ravaged Northern Luzon on 19 October 2016 with its maximum winds of 225 km/h overarching an 800-kilometer diameter. It left 35,733 homeless families and 172,818 families with partially destroyed houses. It affected 432,279 families in the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR), Regions I, II and III with an estimated 88 percent displacement rate, part of which was the result of the forced evacuation implemented by local government units for their constituents living in areas with high susceptibility to multiple hazards such as flooding, flash flood, landslides, and storm surge. While it resulted only in few fatalities, partly due to excellent preparedness by local authorities and the government, the cost in terms of infrastructure, housing, and economic impact has been high.

Through Memorandum Circular 13 series of 2016 and Memorandum Circular 7 series of 2017, the Emergency Shelter Cash Assistance Project (ESCAP) was implemented by DSWD for typhoon Lawin affected households. A total of 208,551 households were provided financial assistance from the Quick Response Funds of the DSWD. Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) served as the main financial conduit.

The disbursement of the assistance was conducted by batches depending on the availability of complete data including LBP enrollment. Cash card modality was used especially for those families in the municipalities and families who are living near the cities which has access to ATMs. It was also considered due to limited SDOs and security reasons. As for direct payout, finance officers or SDOs was responsible to deliver the cash to payout the areas with the assistance of other DSWD personnel. Direct payout modality was used for those families living in coastal areas and Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged Areas (GIDAs).

The determination of appropriate amount of ESAP per beneficiary was based on the validated reports on the extent of damage in the house, whether it is partially or totally, following the set guidelines and criteria provided. It was assessed by the partnership of social workers and LGUs. For the eligible households, P5,000 were initially provided both for households with partially and totally damaged houses. Later, another P5,000 were given to households with partially damaged and P25,000 for those with totally damaged houses. Pantawid Pamilya beneficiaries, beneficiaries in Listahanan data and other poor identified and certified by Barangay Officials Barangays were prioritized.

Monitoring delivery and receipt depended on the modality. For direct payout, liquidation report was sorted after the payout, where SDO was the main responsible. Cash cards were exclusively released by LBP personnel through the assistance of MATs and MSWDOs. LGUs/MSWDOs and the Barangay Officials assist the DSWD in the monitoring in the implementation of the projects during repair/rehabilitation of families' damaged houses with a localized monitoring tool as a strategy of the LSWDOs. Other partners such as CSO/Religious sectors are also helping the department in monitoring the implementation of the assistance extended

Grievances were reported in many forms: media, private and public offices, personal appearances, 8888 hotline, private individual and groups, barangay officials and others. There were established grievance desk in the cash cards releasing areas and at the DSWD Regional Office/SWADs manned by assigned grievance officer. All grievances were recorded and critical grievances were elevated to the management for action. Home-visit, media broadcast or information thru tri-media were some of the modes used by the FO to resolve grievances.

The implementation of the financial assistance was very difficult due to the region's mountainous terrain and geographical location where it is dreadful to access many affected areas especially immediately after the typhoon. Although there were number of volunteers and assistance from NGOs, there were only a limited number of SDOs to manage the funds. It would have been easier for the implementing teams from the DSWD if the cash grant was provided to the beneficiaries in a single transaction rather than in two tranches. Furthermore, in situations where the immediate restoration of electricity is not guaranteed, cash cards should have been replaced by cash or vouchers.

II.3 Typhoon Nina

Typhoon Nina (Nock-ten) can be identified as one of the strongest typhoons to strike the Bicol region in 10 years. The typhoon made a landfall on Christmas day, December 25 of 2016 with maximum winds of up to 185 kilometer per hour (kph) and gustiness of up to 255 kph. Typhoon Nina affected a total of 545,428 households (2,345,666 persons) in the provinces of Albay, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, Catanduanes, Masbate, and Sorsogon (1,231 barangays within 90 municipalities). Many houses and infrastructures like schools and hospitals were destroyed and at least P5.3 billion worth of damages in agriculture in the Bicol Region alone.

A Memorandum from the Secretary dated 3 January 2017 operationalized the ESA and CFW for households affected by Typhoon Nina in Regions IV-A, IV-B, and V. Considering the available resources, as proposed, an initial funding of P513,722,930 should have cover the ESA and CFW of the 72,702 households with totally damaged house. The CFW allotment was in support of the shelter repair of households with totally damaged houses.

Based on the memorandum, a uniform rate of P5,000 each for households either with totally or partially destroyed houses should be provided as initial assistance, with the completion of the ESA Application Form to streamline and expedite the cash distribution. Direct cash payout by the FOs to the beneficiaries should be utilized to expedite the distribution and rebuilding of the damaged shelters.

In the case of Region V, total amount of Php 3,787,060,000 was provided for 271,370 partially and totally damaged houses (P2,177,020,000 partially damaged houses at P10,000 each, and P1,610,040,000 for totally damaged houses at P30,000). The source was from the national budget allocated for this ESA which was jointly implemented by the LGU and the DSWD. In addition, the DSWD Field Office in Region V has also tapped the Food-for-Work (FFW) program to support the shelter repair and rehabilitation of small-scale infrastructures.

The selection of beneficiaries started when LGU submitted list of households with totally and partially damaged houses to DSWD. DSWD workers/MAT verified the submitted list through a house to house assessment and validation. The budget was requested to the CO based on the validated list or number of households with totally and partially damaged houses. The determination of amount was guided by the ESA guidelines.

As anchored in ESA, P30,000 was given to households with totally damaged houses, where in P5,000 as initial payment through direct cash payout modality and P25,000 for Fund Transfer to LGU. For partially damaged houses, P10,000 is released through LBP Cash Card. After the release of P5,000 as initial payment for the totally damaged houses, MAT conducted revalidation to each household if they utilized the ESA grant for the construction/repair of their damaged houses. SDOs to prioritize liquidation of ESA cash advances.

DSWD FO V or Regional Director accepted the grievances and forwarded it to Disaster Risk Reduction Management Unit (DRRMU). If DRRMU could immediately provide solution, the unit sended it back to the DSWD FO V or Regional Director. But in case that DRRMU could not solve the grievance, they forwarded it to Provincial Action Team Leader (PAT) for review and forward to the concerned Municipal Action Team (MAT) which conducted verification and validation, and directly answered the queries and complaints. MAT, then provided feedback report to DRRMU via text, letter, or email. Finally, DRRM forwarded it to Region FO V or Regional Director.

Among the challenges encountered in the implementation of financial assistance for Typhon Nina affected households included the reconciliation of the number of beneficiaries of the assistance. More often than not, the numbers submitted by LGU were higher compared with the data collected by the field staff of the DSWD. Given the number of beneficiaries and the huge amount of disbursement, the field office lacked SDO who were authorized to provide to the beneficiaries their cash grants.



II.4 Earthquake in Caraga Region

In the evening of 10 February 2017, a magnitude 6.7 earthquake shook the island of Mindanao. The epicenter was located 16 kms offshore northwest of Surigao City, Surigao Strait at a depth of 10 km. The earthquake greatly affected Surigao City, Malimono, Sison, San Francisco (Anao-aon`), and Mainit, Surigao del Norte. The damages to property included buildings, bridges, water pipelines, water reservoir, electrical connections, the airport runway, seaport terminal, churches and communication facilities. An aftershock with a magnitude of 5.9 in the morning of 5 March 2017 resulted in the increase of totally damaged houses, because some of those previously partially damaged became totally damaged. P26.9 million worth of assistance was delivered to the entire Caraga Region: P22.5 million from DSWD, P2.7 million from the local government units (LGUs), and P1.7 million from NGOs. Surigao City alone received a total amount of P16.4 million worth of assistance.

A total of 13,542 families (54,735 persons) in five municipalities (91 barangays) were displaced from their dwellings in the entire Caraga Region; 1,917 families (9,585 persons) were in open areas near their homes. There were 10,873 damaged houses, of which, 522 were totally damaged while 10,351 were partially damaged. Eight people died due to the earthquake while 202 people sustained injuries.

The DSWD delivered ready-to-eat food and non-food items, put in place Oplan LINOG (Lingap para sa mga Nasalanta ng Lindol), and a team from DReAMB conducted an ocular inspection and provided technical assistance to DSWD-FO CARAGA in doing disaster operation. Apart from relief goods, the DSWD field office gathered a pool of psychosocial support providers that conducted sessions specifically in the areas of Malimono, San Francisco, and Surigao City in Surigao del Norte.

During the early recovery phase, a FFW program was conducted, and families with totally and partially damaged houses were given priority to participate in the clean-up of the debris and de-clogging of canals in their community. Families who participated were given food packs.

Anchored on Administrative Order (AO) No. 17, Series of 2010, the ESA eligibility requirements to access the assistance were amended to cover the following: household as the basic unit of intervention; household house owners as the recipient of the assistance; all households with damaged houses regardless of economic or income status; all households with damaged houses regardless of lot ownership (titled or informal settlers); and all households with damaged houses regardless of location (safe or unsafe/danger zones). Identified households with totally damaged houses were given priority to ESA, however, due to the high number of partially damaged houses affected by the earthquake as per feedback by the LGU during the ESA/CFW orientation, the DSWD also extended assistance to the identified households with partially damaged houses.

The determination of appropriate amount of ESA per beneficiary was based on the existing guidelines: P30,000 for beneficiaries with totally damaged house and P10,000 for beneficiaries with partially damaged house. The Local Government Unit (LGU) initiated assisting cash and DSWD complemented the remaining cash amount to complete the P30,000 and P10,000 respectively. For instance, in City of Surigao, LGU provided P6,000 for 403 beneficiaries with totally damaged houses and DSWD complemented it with P24,000. In the case of partially damaged houses, DSWD shouldered the entire P10,000 assistance. Other similar arrangements followed by other LGUs, with varying amounts.

No cash card transfer was made but direct cash payout to the beneficiaries during the scheduled date of payout was utilized in respective municipalities. During the direct payout, DSWD personnel directly provided cash assistance to the identified beneficiaries. The role of the LGU was to facilitate the date of payout and the availability of the targeted beneficiaries. FO staff were the ones responsible in checking and verifying the necessary documents presented by the beneficiaries. Utilization of assistance received by the beneficiaries was monitored by the DReAMU staff and the RDRC members.

Grievances were received via formal communication letter sent by the affected resident, thru social media e.g. Facebook, and Thru DSWD e-Reklamo System. Resolution of grievances were addressed by conducting actual verification/validation and response were sent by sending official letter and answering thru e-Reklamo System.

Like any other situation, it took FOs time to validate, assess and establish the damage of the earthquake. Furthermore, the LGUs do not have the database that will serve as basis of who the target beneficiaries will be. The LGU initiated the identification based on who reported were affected. A validation was done prior to the confirmation of being a beneficiary of the cash grant. It was not clear though in their guidelines on how to determine a partially damaged house. The absence of clear

guidelines on what is totally and partially damaged houses in the context of an earthquake and the corresponding financial assistance created several challenges, mostly grievance. It is the LGU through its engineering department who conducted the damaged assessment but it is the DSWD who validated the eligible beneficiaries. Issues on who are the rightful beneficiaries and amount of financial assistance were raised: some households claimed that the cost of repair of their partially damaged concrete house is higher than the cost of repair of a totally damaged nipa hut. Additional challenges were some beneficiaries were not present during the conduct of scheduled payout; some beneficiaries did not claim the assistance, there are double-entry of names of beneficiaries in the masterlist submitted by the LGU.

II.5 Armed Conflict in Marawi

On 23 May 2017, the bloodiest firefight between the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and Islamic extremists erupted in Marawi, a largely Muslim city with a population of over 200,000. The gun battle began after the AFP launched a military and law enforcement operation in pursuit of Abu Sayyaf leader Isnilon Hapilon, who has reportedly been chosen to lead a so-called ISIS branch in Southeast Asia. Hapilon's forces fought back with reinforcement from the Maute Group, a local militant group that has pledged its allegiance to the ISIS.

The Marawi armed conflict is considered as the severest man-made disaster to hit the Philippines in years. As of 11 October, the military reported that the death toll has reached 1,009, which included 160 government forces, 802 fighters of the local armed groups, and at least 47 civilians. Some 400,000 people or close to 80,000 households were reportedly displaced from the 96 barangays (districts) of Marawi City and 20 nearby municipalities in Lanao del Sur. Of the total affected population, 4,086 households (18,294 persons) are currently staying in 78 evacuation centers while 70,895 households (335,064 persons) are staying with their relatives in other seven regions of the country. Many of the internally displaced population (IDPs) were reportedly affected with various medical issues due to crowded evacuation centers, among them are upper respiratory tract infections, skin diseases, pulmonary tuberculosis, acute gastroenteritis, peptic ulcers/dyspepsia. The IDPs are also reportedly suffering from trauma, the uncertainty of their return to their homes, loss of property, livelihood, and possible violation of their basic human rights. To date, the military estimates about 30 civilians remain captive in Marawi.

On the same day that the conflict broke out, while on a state visit to Russia, Philippine President Duterte declared Martial Law in the whole of Mindanao to last for 60 days under Proclamation No. 216, citing rebellion as justification for the declaration. Martial rule was extended until 31 December 2017 after the initial 60 days lapsed on 22 July. On 25 May 2017, Marawi City declared a state of calamity. The military missed its original target on 30 September of clearing Marawi of the Maute terrorist group, hence extended its self-imposed deadline to 15 October.

Two months after the insurgency broke, President Duterte ordered the creation of Task Force Bangon Marawi ("Rise Marawi"; TFBM) through Administrative Order No. 3 dated 28 June 2017. The Task Force is chaired by Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, who is also the Administrator of the martial law in Mindanao, and Public Works and Highways Secretary Mark Villar as vice-chair. Heads of 21 other central government agencies are members of the TFBM and its five sub-committees, namely, Reconstruction, Housing, Health and Social Welfare, Business and Livelihood, and Peace and Order. Among the functions of Task Force Bangon Marawi is to conduct a post-conflict needs assessment of Marawi City and, based on this, develop a "Bangon Marawi Comprehensive Rehabilitation and Recovery Program" in coordination with the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) Government. Monthly progress reports are submitted by the TFBM to the Office of the President.

Sixty-eight (68) Evacuation Centers are currently open in 17 municipalities in Lanao del Norte and Lanao del Sur. Total of ₱300,140,004.00 worth of food and non-food items were provided by the DSWD to its responding Field Offices. The affected families have received ₱406,358,122.97 worth of relief assistance. Of the said amount, ₱244,224,873.28 has been provided by DSWD; ₱51,480,815.00 has been provided by DSWD-ARMM; ₱62,558,155.00 has been provided by ARMM-HEART; ₱21,735,876.90 has been provided by LGUs; and ₱26,358,402.79 has been provided by NGOs.



The Disaster Response and Management Bureau (DReAMB) has augmented to responding Field Offices around 65,500 family food packs composed of five (5) kilos of rice, 6 pieces of canned goods, and 8 sachets of coffee; expected to last for two (2) to three (3) days for a family with five (5) members. Aside from this, tens of thousands of food and nonfood items have also been augmented to Field Offices who are responding to the situation. Funds were also downloaded to FO VII, X, XII and CARAGA for procurement of essentially needed relief items for the affected IDPs.

In consideration to particularities in terms of culture and religion, the traditional disaster assistance provided by DSWD needs to be augmented to appropriately address the specific needs of the IDPs. DSWD recognizes the need for the evacuees to have some cash on hand to purchase other necessities that our current assistance does not provide for. The observance of their religious practices. In addition, cash assistance would also enable them to return back to their communities once the situation stabilizes. Thus, in support of the Muslim population observance of Ramadan, the DSWD implemented a cash transfer program guided by Memorandum Circular 10 series of 2017.

As proposed, 50,000 families are targeted to receive Php 5,000.00 financial assistance. In accordance to Memorandum Circular Number 4, series of 2015. Item No. 4. Coverage, section 4.1.5 states that, *provision of food assistance to clients who are assessed to be in need of such for at least one and a half days up to a maximum of ten days for those caring for sick loved ones or relatives. It includes the immediate provision of hot meals, food/meal allowance, family food packs or financial assistance equivalent to the amount of the required hot meals and food packs. The said assistance may be provided as food allowance to the victims who were granted with transportation assistance during their return to their home province.* Thus, P1,000 is intended for their immediate food assistance and, while the remaining P4,000 is intended to augment their transportation and other needs in going back to their communities once they are allowed to go back to their communities. It will be distributed to the IDPs into two tranches: first their immediate food assistance and followed by their transportation and other needs.

In the implementation of the program, the DSWD works with the LGUs. The fund was downloaded to the LGU who in turn facilitated the release of cash assistance to the IDPs through direct cash payouts. The DSWD designated staff shall conduct the intake interview using the prescribed General Intake Sheet (GIS) or the DAFAC for each family and prepare payroll for the release of the financial assistance. DSWD Field Offices shall keep and maintain detailed records of services rendered or provided on both physical and financial aspects of the services. Field Offices shall include in their bi-weekly reports to the Office of the Undersecretary for Operations and Programs Group (OPG) – Protective Programs the utilizations made under these guidelines. Monitoring shall be conducted by the Field Offices on a daily basis, until the IDPs return to their homes. The Undersecretary for OPG-Protective Programs shall directly oversee the implementation of this Guidelines.

Aside from security, validation of beneficiaries or qualified IDPs has posed difficulties for DSWD to distribute assistance. The number of potential beneficiaries for the cash assistance ballooned, with double and triple entries of people using various aliases. With the help of local officials, DSWD is continuously cleansing its list and validating other affected households who will receive the cash assistance.

In addition to relief and cash assistance, DSWD implements a CFW program to help the evacuees earn money. Under the CFW, IDPs can earn Php200 (USD4) a day for 10 days in exchange of the work that they render, such as dredging canals and cleaning of the evacuation centers. Identified Marawi IDPs who evacuated to other provinces were also offered the same CFW, such as the 250+ IDP families who moved to Cebu.

Since the armed conflict in Marawi is still an on-going crisis at the time of the implementation of financial assistance, the principal issue is the security of the SDOs. The validation of beneficiaries or qualified IDP is also a real challenge. The number of beneficiaries ballooned—double, triple entries were spotted from the list. The DSWD has to resort to their so-called cleansing of the list of potential beneficiaries. To date, the financial assistance has yet to be completed principally because the condition for the release of the second tranche is that the IDP is already back to their original area of residence.

III. Aspects to Consider Towards a New Emergency Cash Transfer Approach in the Philippines

III.1 Selection of Beneficiaries

As of now, the mechanism for identifying and validating beneficiaries during disasters does not maximize existing databases of vulnerable sectors of the population. The Philippines is fortunate to have an existing, regularly updated, and verifiable databases of the vulnerable sectors of its population that could be tapped in times of disaster, namely: *Pantawid Pamilya Information System*, *Listahanan*, DAFAC, and other barangay level data like Community-Based Monitoring System (CBMS). However, in the five cases studied, these databases were not used as the principal source of information for the identification of potential beneficiaries. The *Pantawid Pamilya* List and *Listahanan* were only used as a provision on the prioritization in the delivery of assistance in case of limitation of funds.

In identifying ESA and ESCAP eligible beneficiaries in Typhoons Yolanda, Lawin, Nina and earthquake in Caraga, DSWD mainly relied on the list submitted by LGU. The validation of the list of eligible beneficiaries is a principal responsibility of the LGU/MSWDO, though, during Typhoon Lawin it was conducted as a joint responsibility of the LGU/MSWDO and DSWD FO. Based on the LGU/MSWDO or LGU/MSWDO and DSWD validated list of beneficiaries, the LGU will submit a proposal to DSWD FO. The DSWD - RDMU will then cross-check all the names in the list of eligible beneficiaries and if there are errors and questions, will again send back the proposal to the LGU for corrections. The corrected proposal that includes the clean list of eligible ESA/ESCAP beneficiaries will be submitted by the RDMU to the Central Office and will be the basis of fund release. This list is what DSWD-FO validated through house-to-house visits to come up with final list of eligible beneficiaries. Even in the financial assistance for IDPs of the armed conflict in Marawi, the list of eligible beneficiaries was also based on the list submitted by the LGU and was only sanitized by DSWD. Meanwhile, in the 5KPFA, the main source was the list prepared by the POs and NGOs.

The ESA and ESCAP beneficiaries were chosen based on the extent of actual damage to the houses. The common practice in identifying ESA/ESCAP beneficiaries starts with the submission of the BLGU to the LGU of the list of households with damaged houses in their community verified through house-to-house. The DSWD required the LGU to submit the list within 24-72 hours after the disaster. The initial list will then be validated by the MSWDO again thru house-to-house. In some areas, it is done thru joint validation with DSWD staff. In coming up with the list, no references were made to existing databases (Pantawid list, Listahanan, CDMS, etc.) except for cross-checking of who will be prioritized in the processing of requirements. Though, all LGUs referred to their hazard maps in order to hasten the identification of the potential victim-beneficiaries. One exception is in the case of Caraga, where the criteria was streamlined only on whether the households have partially or totally damaged houses and excluded the poverty-related requirements to qualify for the assistance. This part corrected the issue of “now-poor” victims due to the disaster that could be possibly be left out for assistance.

It is timely to revisit the identification of beneficiaries, not particularly limiting it in the category of households based on totally and partially damaged houses. The database of potential beneficiaries should transcend more social income class. Identification of beneficiaries could also be easier and faster if only an operations system in mapping-out the vulnerable sectors in an emergency and stockpiling data during pre-disaster and post-disaster have been established between the LGU and DSWD.

III.2 Benefit Level

Guidelines on the appropriate amount of cash assistance under ESA are not clear, and not based on the actual assessed damaged and assistance needed. While Administrative Order No. 17, Series of 2010 or the Omnibus Shelter Act does not define the amount disbursed o ESA, the MCs of the central office explicitly determined the amount of financial assistance. In the case of Lawin, MC 13 series of 2016 (ESCAP) directed the immediate assistance of Php 5,000 to all eligible beneficiaries, and additional Php 5,000 and Php 25,000 for household-beneficiaries with partial and total damaged houses. In the case of Nina, a memorandum from the Secretary dated 15 March 2017 directed a uniformed rate of Php 5,000 for all eligible household both with partial and total damaged houses. The full ESA rate of Php 10,000 and Php 30,000 was determined on the basis of PDNA and terminal reports of the FOs. In Caraga, the Php 30,000 and Php 10,000 for totally and partially damaged houses was stipulated in the memorandum from the Secretary. These amounts according to the central office (CO) is based on the computed cost of materials of the most common parts of the houses that could be damaged by disasters.



The most pressing issue by the FOs is the determination of appropriate level of benefit. For instance, FO staff have had difficulties in determining whether a house is partially or totally damaged. As social workers, they are trained to assess the human condition in a community, but not the structural condition of a house. Their resourcefulness led them to reach out to the LGU thru its engineering department to do this assessment. Moreover, the FOs do not have a clear idea on how the amounts for cash assistance for partially and totally damaged house were determined. So that, when field staff were confronted with inquiries from beneficiaries on why they can only get either Php 10,000 or Php 30,000, the staff only answer and direct the beneficiaries to the corresponding guideline.⁶

III.3 Cash payment modality

Direct cash payout reaches beneficiaries much faster, and validation and liquidation are easier. Direct cash payment, check payment, cash cards, or combination of these are the widely used modalities in the delivery of financial assistance in the five cases studied. The choice of modality is based on the access to service providers, number of beneficiaries, amount of assistance, and topography. For example, in the earthquake in Caraga, the FO initially wanted to just download the funds to LGU but LGU refused due to accountability issue. The FO opted direct cash payout considering the smaller number of beneficiaries. In typhoons Lawin, Nina and Yolanda, the combination of direct cash payout, check, and cash cards were used considering the large number of beneficiaries and the fact that there are beneficiaries who live near the cities who have access to service machines or ATM booths while others are living in isolated areas have none.

FOs generally prefer direct cash payout modality. This is more in relation to easier liquidation, accountability, and the poor's difficulty in using cash cards. In the Caraga experience of a direct payout, DSWD-FO eases out the system of liquidation by using two copies of DAFAC—one for the beneficiary and one for the SDO. Once the SDOs delivered the cash assistance and the beneficiary signed and received the DAFAC, it is deemed liquidated. The DSWD-FO will just need to countercheck the numbers of signed DAFAC with the amount of disbursement. The other issue is the complexity and enormous technical issues the FO experiences on the cash cards. Enrollment of beneficiaries to Landbank is already a logistical challenge for DSWD-FO since the beneficiaries need to go to the bank. Also, data already gathered in DAFAC has to return to beneficiary just to get other data needed by the bank such as mother's maiden name of the beneficiary. While the CO shoulders the cost of cash cards, most of the beneficiaries complaint is the technical issue that they cannot use the full amount of the assistance due to following: there are charges if they withdraw to non-Landbank ATMs, amounts can only be withdrawn in multiples of P50 (subject to the availability of the ATM), and percentage cut or charges to some enterprising individual who exploits the poor's illiteracy on cash card use by volunteering to withdraw on their behalf. However, most of these issues can be solved if it is possible for Land Bank of the Philippines in coordination with the LGUs to provide mobile ATM booth in disaster areas.

The security of SDOs is seen as the primary advantage of using cash cards. The SDOs is fully responsible to secure and liquidate the cash advance amounting to millions of pesos. SDOs are taking a big risk in the delivery of financial assistance to beneficiaries. Carrying a large amount of cash to far-flung areas or in areas with peace and order problem is always not safe. As a compulsory assignment, the SDOs have no choice but to bear the huge risks, both for their physical security and fiduciary. The DSWD-FO has to make security arrangement to the SDOs carrying cash. In Region V, one of its security precautions is to use only Kalahi vehicles and tenured drivers only. Region V sometimes arranges different vehicles to minimize the risk of potential robbery. Though relatively smaller amount, in Marawi where there is a continuing armed conflict, delivery of assistance is literally under the cover of firing guns. A lesser risk for the SDOs is a voucher system if it possible for Land bank of the Philippines to allow over-the-counter withdrawal using a voucher (i.e. affected families assessed by DSWD shall only be given claim voucher). Obviously, the use of cash cards is the most secure solution but inefficiencies in LBP and technical problems in the use of cash cards must be addressed. There is a need to find ways to ease up the enrolment for and use of a cash card by coming up with an agreement with the service providers. This may entail promulgation of corrective measures with the help of Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), Department of Finance (DOF) and other agencies.

The mode of payout specified in the guidelines was not appropriately consulted with the field offices who are in the best position to advise, considering safety and ease in the implementation. For instance, in the case of Marawi, the cash assistance was instructed to be distributed in the form of cash. However, due to the peace and order situation in their area, it would have been better that the assistance was given through cash cards. In the case of Yolanda, the top up of the cash assistance to the Pantawid Pamilya beneficiaries that maybe taken by withdrawing cash using their cash cards, although faster, was inconvenient for some of the beneficiaries due to their inaccessibility to working ATMs.

III.4 Cash Disbursements

The delivery of ESA/ESCAP is very much delayed. While ESA/ESCAP is intended to be used for repair or rebuilding of damaged houses, in most cases, it was received by the beneficiaries after they have completed or almost done with the repair or rebuilding of their houses. In CAR and Region 2, initial cash assistance was received by the beneficiaries at the earliest four weeks after the disaster while most of the beneficiaries received it only after a month or two months. The full assistance was received by most of the beneficiaries more than a year after the disaster. There are some beneficiaries who have yet to receive the full assistance. In Region IVa, the initial cash assistance was only for households with totally damaged houses and they received it only after more than two months. It took almost a year before the assistance to the partially damaged houses were delivered, including the full assistance for households with totally damaged houses.

However, the victims started to repair their damaged houses immediately after the disaster through community *Bayanihan* and by using salvaged materials or construction materials provided by LGUs and other private organizations. The victims would then use own money or borrow money from relatives, MFIs, and other service providers in order to finish the repair. The repair is usually done in a month time, except for those who opted for improvements and expansions.

The tedious process of compiling the numerous requirements to access ESA funds is one of the causes of delay in delivering cash assistance to beneficiaries. The delay in the delivery of assistance through ESA is always on top of the list of grievances. But more than grievance, delays diminish the effectivity of assistance. During disasters, the timing of the delivery of assistance to the beneficiaries is very critical. However, almost always the financial assistance through ESA and ESCAP was delayed. It was delayed in Yolanda, Lawin, and Nina. In the experience after typhoon Lawin, the accessibility of affected areas contributed to the delay. In CAR, delivery of second tranche of Lawin financial assistance has yet to be completed. In Typhoon Nina, the funds were downloaded to the field office five months after the disaster. The delay was mainly due to the revalidation of the list of potential beneficiaries provided to them by the LGUs because they seemed to be overestimated. According to Region IV-A, it will take them at least one month to process and deliver the financial assistance after the fund was downloaded to them.

However, delays are expected in ESA due to the numerous requirements in its guidelines. The DSWD-FO making area visits and doing house-to-house to validate the list of the beneficiary is essentially repeating what has already been done by LGU-MSWDO and their engineering department in determining the number of households with damaged houses. The processing of households request for assistance is a tedious process because, for instance, households are required to submit photo documentation of the extent of damage to their houses before they can be given the financial assistance. Having to print pictures would require the household's money to have pictures printed. Also, households are required to secure certification from their MSWDO and Provincial Action Team (PAT) Leader, as part of the documentary requirement. One improvisation on this process is implemented in an earthquake in Caraga where DSWD staff joined with the LGU in assessment and listing of the beneficiaries so as to avoid redundancy. In the four municipalities in Region 2 and CAR, the problems in the validation of eligible beneficiaries are exacerbated by the Central Office issuance of another form, ESCAP form, aside from the usual DAFAC, to be accomplished by the beneficiaries, which incidentally has different required information and signatures, thus, forced the MSWDO and DSWD staff to go back to the victims. Another form, the Landbank form for cash card registration, again included required data (mother's maiden name) not included in both the previously filled up forms.



The limited number of SDOs in conjunction with too many requirements to accomplish and the magnitude of disasters is another reason for the delay in delivering cash assistance. This problem is underscored on disasters with a lot of beneficiaries, thus, a large amount of financial assistance to be delivered. In the current system, only regular employees are allowed to be SDO. The amount the SDO can deliver at a given time through cash advance is based on the salaries and net worth of the SDO. The SDOs has to liquidate first their cash advances before they can avail of another cash advance. In Region V, the FO improvised on this system by requiring all qualified employees especially those with higher income level to be on board on the delivery system. Almost similar improvisation is done in Region II.

From the point of view of the FO, financial assistance should be delivered on a single tranche to the beneficiaries. Assistance by tranches not only defeats the purpose of early recovery but also translates to additional administrative burden. It was mentioned by the FOs that if there are two tranches, the first tranche needs to be liquidated first before the receipt of the second tranche. This happened in both ESA and ESCAP in all the five cases studied. As one participant mentioned, before the beneficiary-household receives the second tranche, another disaster could have occurred again. In Marawi, delivery of financial assistance in two tranches (initial P1,000 in the observance of Eid al-Fitr and P4,000 for transportation) to IDPs exposes SDOs to an unnecessary security issue in the midst of continuing gun battle. This is true in all the delivery of financial assistance in all far-flung areas and in areas with peace and order problem.

III.5 Implementation and Coordination Arrangements

Lack of consultation and coordination between central office and field offices led to confusion of staff in implementing the guidelines and program implementation. All the ECT instruments are operationalized through MCs issued by the DSWD central office (CO). The MCs provide detailed guidelines for the implementation of the cash transfers. For the five case studies, their respective MCs defined: (1) the criteria for the selection of beneficiaries, (2) the amount of assistance for each beneficiary, and (3) the modality of the cash transfer and its purpose or intended use. Yet, in crafting these MCs, the field offices were not involved and consulted for their inputs on the realities on the ground. This resulted in confusions, different interpretations of the requirements, and issues between the CO and the FO on the implementation.

It is not unusual that there will be a series of memoranda for the purpose of clarification, for instance on including criteria on who or who may not be eligible to receive financial assistance. In the case of the 5KPFA, Memorandum Circular 08, series of 2017 has to be issued after Memorandum Circular 03, series of 2017 to allow city and municipal social welfare and development officers to certify eligible beneficiaries with no ID and living in areas with no representatives, and to allow the use of direct cash payout in the delivery of assistance. In the case of those affected by typhoon Nina, Memorandum dated 3 March 2017 was issued after Memorandum dated 3 January 2017 to relax some documentary requirements, which are the optional submission of the photo documentation of damaged shelters and allowing multiple modalities in addition to the direct cash payout in order to expedite the project implementation.

Meanwhile, the LGU which is interested in availing of the ESA has to accomplish and process volumes of requirements. Among them are Disaster Terminal Report, Project Proposal, Rehabilitation Plan, Certificate of Eligibility of the Beneficiaries, Master list of Proposed Beneficiaries, prepared by C/MSWDO and approved by the Municipal Mayor, Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP), Certification from either from the Provincial, City or Municipal Engineering Office certifying the areas as safe from hazards based on the CLUP of the LGU. Though the MCs limits the requirements on a case-to-case basis, it is still enormous.

III.6 Monitoring and Grievance

There is an existing system to monitor funds, grievances, and outputs—but monitoring of the outcomes of the financial assistance is currently not purposely done. The DSWD-FO and LGU have an established system of monitoring disbursement and utilization of funds for financial assistance. Aside from this system, the FO is also encouraged to tap Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Peoples Organizations (POs) and other government agencies to assist them in project monitoring, validation, and evaluation, in the principle of independence and objectivity to encourage transparency and accountability of FO as the direct implementer.

In the five cases studied, each FO has established a system of monitoring grievance resolutions as their response to the grievances coming to them in many forms, such as; media, private and public offices, personal appearances, 8888 hotline, private individual and groups, and barangay officials. For example in typhoon Lawin, the FO has established grievance desk specifically for cash cards issues. A system of grievance and complaint resolutions has been put in place for typhoon Nina. The FO practiced different approaches in monitoring the financial assistance. Some assigned Project Development Officers (PDO), some relied on their employees, others have established a partnership with LGU-MSWDO and barangay officials in support of MAT/SWAD even with partners such as CSO/religious sectors.

However, these monitoring systems are designed more on addressing potential grievances on the distribution of the cash assistance to its intended beneficiaries. A deeper concern is how to monitor recovery which is the strategic goal of the disaster response. In the five cases studied, the DSWD-FO admitted that there is no effort to purposely monitor the outcomes of the financial assistance. According to them, one of the reasons for this lapse is because they are burdened with too many tasks and responsibilities. However, in the case of 4Ps, their built-in system of Talaarawan, Family Development Session, and case management partly serve the purpose of monitoring the outcomes on the financial assistance extended to them.

IV. Moving Forward

There is a need of a paradigm shift in responding to disasters. The DSWD response experiences in the five disasters studied in this workshop highlighted the urgency of developing a national framework for an ECT system. There is a need to set up a new instrument that is more appropriate as an ECT during disasters. It could be an institutionalize ECT in the LGU level with an augmentation support from DSWD regional, or an institutionalize DSWD initiated ECT as an augmentation support for LGU, among others.

But if DSWD has to come up with an overall ECT framework or ECT guidelines, it has to be flexible to cater to different disasters. It has to be capable of delivering immediate cash relief during disasters. This type of ECT program aims to provide beneficiaries initial cash allowances to promote faster recovery, repairs to homes and initiate a market to resume livelihood. Also, a separate cash delivery mechanism that would be able to reduce the burden of in-kind assistance and logistical costs.

The definition of the specific role of DSWD as government's lead agency on disaster response and the LGU as the frontline in an emergency situation and disasters should be addressed in the future workshop. It is timely to revisit the current framework that DSWD assistance is only for augmentation purposes and that the exhaustion of the LGUs Quick Response Fund (QRF) should be considered before providing the assistance. It would also be important to look into the complementation of work among the government pillars on emergency and disaster response: DSWD, LGU, DILG, NDRRM/AFP and development partners, among others.

