



FORTIFYING DISASTER RESILIENCE: CHALLENGES, COPING STRATEGIES, AND ASPIRATIONS OF DAVAO REGION'S DRRMOCs IN THE PHILIPPINES FOR THE WELLBEING OF COMMUNITIES

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ABSTRACT – Being the world's most disaster-prone nation, the Philippines is an enviable position that highlights the necessity of having strong Disaster Risk Reduction Management Operations Centers (DRRMOC). These facilities are essential for lessening the effects of natural disasters. In particular, the Davao Region's Operations Centers act as essential centers for response cluster coordination. Under normal conditions, they provide routine monitoring and report production, acting as the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in the event of a potential emergency. However, the lack of funding for these DRRMOCs presents serious difficulties. This study explores the challenges faced by the DRRMOCs in the Davao Region, looking at their strategies for overcoming setbacks, constraints, goals, and understanding of the larger catastrophe context and each wellbeing taken into account. Twenty-five informants took part in focus groups and interviews, including DRRMOC staff and victims of disasters. The results show that the Davao Region's DRRMOCs face difficulties related to resource limitations, such as decreased output, work inefficacy, and staff burnout. In spite of these obstacles, the DRRMOCs use coping mechanisms such staff empowerment, resource efficiency, and positive resource management to get over operational difficulties. The need of establishing uniform resource requirements, bolstering capacity building, and allotting adequate funds to remove operational obstacles are emphasized in the discussion. In addition, it becomes clear that engaging stakeholders and carrying out doable tasks are essential elements of improving readiness when confronted with constraints. In summary, although the Philippines must confront its extreme catastrophe susceptibility, proactive steps, sufficient funding, and cooperative efforts may strengthen the DRRMOCs, guaranteeing a more effective response to the challenges inherent in disaster management with the community wellbeing as the prime goal.

Keywords: coping mechanism, disaster experiences, environmental management

INTRODUCTION

The Philippines holds the unfortunate distinction of being the world's most disaster-prone country (Buot, 2017; Buot & Dulce, 2019; Lagmay et al., 2016). This vulnerability is rooted in a variety of natural

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hazards stemming from the country's geographical location and geotectonic setting, as noted by Acosta et al. (2018). The Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010 is an essential step in improving the disaster risk reduction response system and is vital in supporting the Philippines' implementation of disaster management activities and policies. The foundation for the proactive institutionalization of Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) initiatives is set forward by this. Aspiring to create a quality workplace, the working staff's aspirations for resilience and excellence are integral to fortifying disaster resilience, reflecting the ongoing challenge of addressing challenges, implementing coping strategies, and aspiring towards a more resilient future.

In the case of the Davao Region, its diverse location has made it a hotspot for disasters throughout its history. The region's geographical features expose it to a high level of hazards, while its geological characteristics contribute to the frequent occurrence of earthquakes. The Operation Center (OpCen) needs to be built to withstand and support emergency responses in order to function as the physical and virtual hub for coordinating and supporting incident management actions (Elmahal et al., 2022; Hardhantyo et al., 2023; Ma et al., 2020). Additionally, the OpCen plays a crucial role in coordinating operational activities before, during, and after disasters. It functions as the central point for alert dissemination, monitoring multi-agency and multi-level operational coordination responses, resource mobilization, and information management, as per NDRRMC Memorandum Circular No. 131 (2018). Consequently, the Operations Center is tasked with regular monitoring and the production of routine reports.

Given the current physical conditions at the Davao Region's Provincial Operations Centers (POCs), it is time to look at their potential as operational facilities for handling the complexities of disaster response. This assessment should consider both the staff within the POCs and the larger community. Informants' direct experiences, which include their obstacles, coping methods, aspirations, and points of view on improving disaster preparedness, provide invaluable insights. This is especially important for workers working in a DRRMOC with current restrictions, as well as those who have witnessed the aftermath of disasters, which can help to build more successful strategies.

The current study specifically sought to answer the following questions:

1. What were the challenges experienced by the Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Operations Centers (PDRRMOC) in the Davao Region with its current status?
2. How did the PDRRMOC in the Davao Region cope with the challenges?
3. What were the aspirations for the PDRRMOC of the Davao Region regarding its limitations?
4. How would PDRRMOC strengthen its preparedness for the next disaster considering its limitations?

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This study explored the challenges of the personnel with OpCen's limited infrastructure and its coping mechanism. Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework that tries to bridge the challenges of having a limited infrastructure and the coping mechanism to have a ready Operation Center to address the impacts of hazards and pandemics.

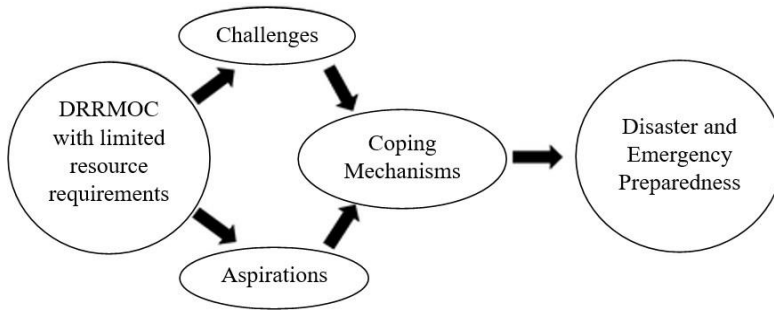


Figure 1. Illustrative diagram showing the readiness of the Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Operations Center in the Davao Region.

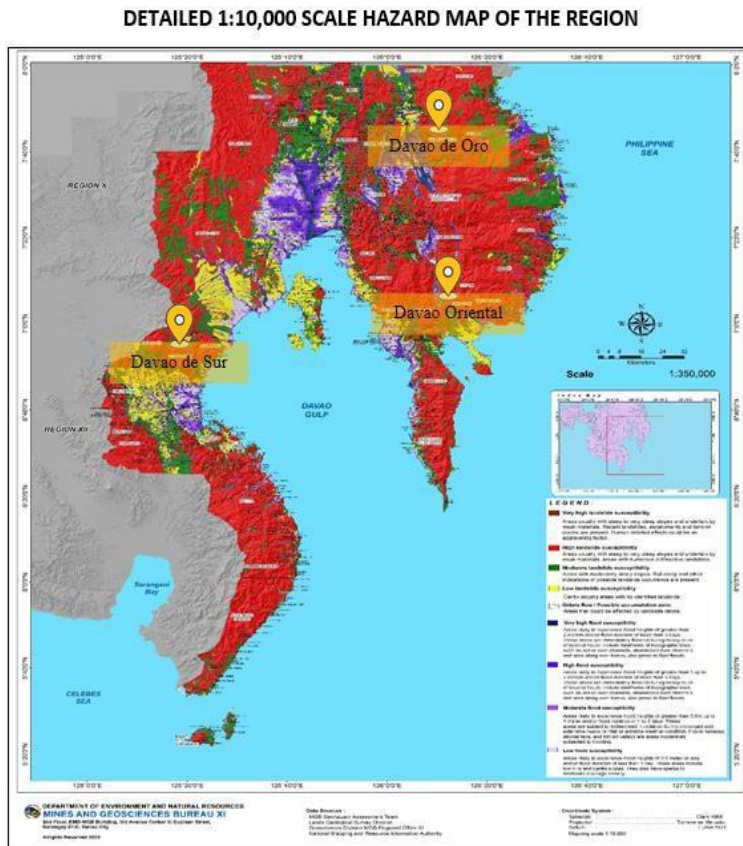


Figure 2. Map of the Davao Region showing the study area.

METHODOLOGY

Research Locale

This study was conducted in the Davao Region, specifically in its three provinces namely: Davao Oriental, Davao de Oro, and Davao del Sur (Figure 2). These provinces were selected based on the frequency and intensity of impacts caused by the disaster as in 2022.

Research Design

The phenomenological qualitative research method was used in this study depicting the participants' lived experiences with a phenomenon as they describe it. As this study focused on examining the challenges of the personnel and their coping strategies in operating the facility with limited resources as well as their aspirations, the qualitative approach was the most suited for this exploration. Focus group discussions (FGD) were done with the consent of the informants which they found beneficial to obtain rich interaction and idea sharing that prompted them to recall experiences that they would not have likely remembered and that were not mentioned by others. A thematic analysis was conducted to explore the challenges, coping strategies, and aspirations related to disaster resilience in the Philippines. This approach involved systematically coding and categorizing data from interviews, focus groups, and relevant documents to identify recurring themes. The analysis was iterative, with themes being refined and revised as new data were collected and analyzed.

Informants

The informants of this study were selected and considered this study because they met the preselected criteria relevant to the research question (Table 1).

Table 1. Distribution of informants for the study.

Participants	Number of Participants	
	DRRMOC Personnel	Victims
Davao Oriental	5	4
Davao de Oro	4	4
Davao del Sur	4	4
Total	13	12

The names of the informants were concealed as well as those of the LGU to avoid unlikely issues that the informants could face. Pseudonyms were given so as not to reveal their true identities.

Ethical Consideration

The ethical standards of conducting the study and the guidelines in ethical research namely: respect for persons, beneficence, justice, and respect for the community will be employed were strictly followed. Consent was secured with full understanding as an informant before the audio recording of the responses in an in-depth interview and FGD.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Challenges of the PDRRMOCs in the Davao Region with Current Status

The pandemic has tested the productivity, efficiency, and effectiveness of the holistic infrastructure system to support critical operations continuity across various agencies. Updated infrastructure has opened the door for accelerating initiatives to support a distributed workforce and seeking ways to bring essential teams together. Thus, the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) enumerated the resource requirements of a recommended DRRMOC namely: training; policies, guidelines, and documentation; facility; office equipment and tools; safety and security features; software and computer programs; network tools and connectivity equipment; communication tools and equipment; and mobility.

To produce a complete and inclusive discussion of the challenges of the PDRRMOC, there were two separate probing questions asked to the informants during the in-depth interviews and the FGD. For the DRRMOC personnel: *What is your idea regarding the present situation of the OpCen in your province? What challenges have you encountered in performing your tasks as DRRMOC personnel with limited resource requirements?*

For the victims of catastrophes: *What is your idea regarding the present situation of the OpCen in your province? What challenges have you encountered coordinating with the DRRMOC before, during, and after the disaster?*

Based on the answers of the informants from the in-depth interviews and the FGD, three main themes arose which are supported by the core ideas for each theme (Table 3).

Table 3. Challenges of the PDRRMOCs in the Davao Region with its current status.

Major Themes	Core Ideas
Productivity reduction	Impeded long-term strategy development and implementation Delayed information dissemination Inefficiency of resource augmentation Disrupted efficient coordination Lessened effectiveness of response actions Limited access to real-time data
Workforce inefficacy	Inappropriate reporting and/or documentation Difficulty in data and situation interpretation
Burnout personnel	Personnel tend to multi-task Personnel get pressured

The informants' answers revealed three main themes that surfaced out of the in- depth interviews and FGD. These were the challenges of the PDRRMOC in the Davao Region with limited infrastructure: one was productivity reduction, the next was workforce deficiency, and lastly, the burnout of personnel.

It was evident that there were various challenges experienced by the personnel as well as the victims because of limited resource requirements. They revealed that it affected their performance functioning as personnel:

'Limited infrastructure poses challenges in developing and implementing long-term strategies against recurring disasters.'

(KIII_IDIRQ1C)

'Since we have a limited communication network, the information dissemination is delayed, especially during bad weather conditions.'

(KII9_IDIRQ1C)

Some of the informants also shared that they experience issues in coordinating with the DRRMOC:

'Due to limited personnel, sometimes we cannot augment responders on the ground quickly.'

(KII18_IDIRQ1C)

'I find it difficult to contact them since they have limited communication equipment.'

(KII5_IDIRQ1F)

'Since the personnel lacks training, response actions are not that effective.'

(KII14_IDIRQ1F)

'Considering their limitations, usually, it is hard to access real-time data.'

(KII22_IDIRQ1F)

The next major theme that surfaced from the informants' responses both in the in- depth interviews and FGD is workforce inefficacy. This is another identified challenge of the DRRMOC personnel with limited resources. Informant Myka (KII10_IDIRQ1C) presented a struggle in consolidating reports. She said that not all personnel know how to craft reports:

'Some of the personnel here cannot come up with comprehensive reporting since they are not given the chance to attend any related capacity development activities.'

(KII10_IDIRQ1C)

'Some of us find it hard to interpret the data or the situation at hand and we barely attend related workshops to address our weakness.'

(FGD5_RQ1C)

As the informants revealed, the inefficacy of their performance is also a result of limited opportunities to be trained. And if there are opportunities, they cannot attend because they cannot risk leaving their post since they are only limited.

The third major theme that came out for the question on the challenges of the personnel of PDRRMOC with limited infrastructure is burnout personnel. Informants are faced with a dilemma because they are expected to perform accordingly with limited resources at hand (Maningo and Phyu, 2023). The

staff cannot refuse because they were given the tasks and responsibilities to do so.

It was only with deep sighs that Arnie (KII2_IDIRQ1C) expressed his frustrations as a DRRMOC personnel. He was true in acknowledging their limitations:

‘Since we have limited resources, especially in terms of manpower, we tend to multi-task here. And it is very tiring.’
(KII2_IDIRQ1C)

It is in the same disposition that informant Abbie (pseudonym) expressed her feelings whenever she goes to work:

‘I usually feel pressured every time I go to work. Since I almost got the chance to attend capacity development activities, all document works have been assigned to me.’
(KII19_IDIRQ1C)

A similar experience holds for other informants as well:

‘If you are assigned to the OpCen everyone expects you to know everything needed when it comes to response operations, even if you know in yourself that you are not capable of it.’
(FGD22_RQ1C)

The informants disclosed three major themes on the first research question: productivity reduction; workforce inefficacy; and burnout personnel.

If the OpCen is not productive in performing its duties and functions, then this calls for a serious discussion. For an OpCen to operate well, it needs to be supplied with the standard resource requirements. As recommended by the OCD, a DRRMOC must have the following: training; policies, guidelines, and documentation; facility; office equipment and tools; safety and security features; software and computer programs; network tools and connectivity equipment; communication tools and equipment; and mobility. These resources will ensure the productive operation of the DRRMOC.

In addition, it was said that an OpCen needs personnel who understand the roles and responsibilities of the said hub. In other words, workforce inefficacy is a threat to the

performance of OpCen. If this pertains, the more it poses unreliability of the personnel to perform their functions. Thus, appropriate training is required to aid the issue at hand.

Consequently, the efficiency and efficacy of the OpCen is also a product of well-composed personnel. With competent personnel, an OpCen can operate without hesitation despite having limited resources. Thereupon, if the OpCen has burnout personnel, then ensuring the efficiency and efficacy of the OpCen is at stake.

Updated infrastructure has opened the door for accelerating initiatives to support a distributed workforce and seeking ways to bring essential teams together. Thus, the results conform with Ngo et al. (2022) claims that because of limited infrastructures authorities are unable to efficiently offer services sustainably, protect citizens, or even promote future economic growth without an integrated platform. However, they emphasized that integrating monitoring, regulating, and other systems into a unified platform

allows more efficient information delivery, better operational management, communication, cooperation, and decision-making. Elmahal et al. (2022) also added that it becomes a stressful working environment that is physically and mentally demanding on staff, especially if they lack technical expertise or do not receive formal training. Hence, providing personnel with relevant and consistent training can help improve performance and efficiency in the workplace.

Furthermore, Bundy et al. (2016) accentuate that all crises share the same set of challenges, including shattered command-and-control structures; malfunctioning communication systems; and ineffective resource allocation. In addition, stresses that pitfalls such as lack of skilled staff; lack of automation and orchestrations; too many unintegrated tools and equipment; lack of management support; and lack of processes of the playbook must be avoided. Yet, ensuring more structured and organized operations can only be acquired if the OpCen has enough strategic and operational documents (Elmahal et al., 2022). Therefore, a well-established OpCen requires a facility as the most basic requirement to consider that ensure the workers' safe and comfortable work environment.

The findings of this study exposed some vital points in conducting a comprehensive assessment of the existing infrastructure and identifying critical gaps. Local Government Unit and the Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management may prioritize the needs based on their impact on disaster response and management. Also, to invest in training programs for personnel involved in disaster management. This includes both technical skills related to infrastructure management and soft skills for effective communication and coordination. Explore the integration of technology to overcome the limitations. This may include utilizing cloud-based solutions, mobile applications, and other digital platforms for communication and data management. In addition, the office may forge partnerships with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the private sector to leverage their resources and expertise in improving infrastructure. This collaboration can lead to joint initiatives, resource-sharing, and innovative solutions. Moreover, the establishment of a routine maintenance schedule for existing infrastructure to ensure it remains functional may be considered. Hence, regular upkeep is essential for infrastructure resilience and longevity. Furthermore, the management may advocate for policies that prioritize and support the improvement of disaster-resilient infrastructure, as well as engage with policymakers at different levels to highlight the importance of investing in infrastructure for disaster risk reduction. Thus, it is also beneficial to revisit the NDRRMC Memorandum No. 131, s. (2018) which stipulates the guidelines on the establishment, operationalization, and management of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) that will serve as an OpCen in normal situations.

Coping Mechanisms of the PDRRMOCs in the Davao Region with the Challenges

Being a DRRMOC personnel is both a rewarding and challenging humanitarian job, a fact proved by the numerous studies done such as adaptability, engagement, and capacity to perform at work rely upon the personnel's well-being and its working environment (Agsaoay et al., 2022). Also, coping mechanisms are an ally in building a disaster-resilient community for individuals who experience calamities (Yusuf, 2018). Thus, it helps individuals deal with challenges or uncomfortable situations positively.

Two separate probing questions asked to provide an in-depth understanding of the coping mechanisms used by the PDRRMOCs in the Davao Region with limited infrastructure. For the DRRMOC personnel: *What coping mechanisms did you use to overcome the challenges in performing your tasks as DRRMOC personnel with limited infrastructure? What do you think can be done to help DRRMOC personnel overcome the challenges?*

For the victims of catastrophes: *What coping mechanisms did you use to overcome the challenges in coordinating the DRRMOC? What do you think can be done to overcome the challenges?*

The informants' responses revealed three major themes supported by the core ideas. These are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Coping mechanism of the PDRRMOC in the Davao Region with the Challenges.

Major Themes	Core Ideas
Resource efficiency	Using available and serviceable equipment Investing in reliable communication equipment Employing existing data management tools and software Utilizing personnel efficiently Implementation of DRRM-related initiatives
Positive resource management	Prioritizing essential needs Maintaining resource-efficient practices Innovating cost-effective solutions Coordination with other PDRRMC member-agencies
Personnel empowerment and reinforcement	Continuously enhancing personnel's skills and capabilities through training Personnel augmentation of partner agencies Promoting volunteerism

The major themes are the informants' answers when asked about their coping mechanisms to overcome the challenges of the PDRRMOCs in the Davao Region with limited infrastructure, which are: resource efficiency; positive resource management; and personnel empowerment and reinforcement.

The first theme that emerged during the in-depth interview and FGD revealed by the informants is resource efficiency. This helped them to be able to perform their duties and functions despite having limited resources. As informant Aberina (KII3_IDIRQ2A) shared:

'We only use the available and serviceable equipment at hand to do our routine tasks and other services.'
(KII3_IDIRQ2A)

Informant Jammil (KII6_IDIRQ2A) has the same practice as well:

'With limited resources at hand, we ensure to employ the existing data management tools and software we have in the OpCen.'
(KII6_IDIRQ2A)

During the FGD, the informants also shared how they coped with the challenges:

'Based on my experience, it would be very helpful if the administration invested in reliable communication equipment.'
(FGD1_RQ2B)

Also, the informants shared that acknowledging the significance of the community's role in attaining a disaster-resilient society is important:

'Participating in DRRM-related activities such installation of early warning devices is a great help to the community.'
(FGD14_RQ2C)

'Requesting responders that are only needed for the incident is also helpful.'
(FGD18_RQ2D)

The second major theme generated from the informants' responses is positive resource management. This attitude allows them to become efficient and effective in overcoming the challenges experienced. Informant Mark (KII11_IDIRQ2A) expressed how helpful prioritizing resources that are needed the most:

'In procuring the supplies or resources needed in the OpCen, it is very beneficial to prioritize only those important and needed. Aside from it can help save budget allocations, the procured resources will not be wasted.'
(KII11_IDIRQ2A)

Managing the resources positively also reminds the personnel that they can still perform with limited resources. As informant Grace (KII20_IDIRQ2A) shared:

'In our OpCen, we always do resource-efficient practices such as repairing equipment with minimal issues.'
(KII20_IDIRQ2A)

Aside from the personnel, informant Joanna (KII5_IDIRQ2C) also shared that based on her experience, she learned that it is not only in the OpCen that you can ask for help in times of calamities:

'Since I could not contact the OpCen during the earthquake and because I knew that their personnel's threshold was only limited, I immediately asked for help from the BFP.'
(KII15_IDIRQ2C)

Also, informants shared their practices to overcome the challenges at hand during the FGD:

'In our jurisdiction, acknowledging the limited resources we have, we usually innovate cost-effective practices that can still provide solutions to our problems.'
(FGD10_RQ2A)

The third major theme that emerged in the question about the coping mechanisms is personnel empowerment and reinforcement. Personnel are the people who are responsible for performing the tasks given. Informants revealed that boosting the confidence of the personnel is highly valuable.

Informants also emphasized how important a well-trained and high spirit of volunteerism is:

'Giving the responders the same opportunity to be trained is a great help.'
(FGD2_RQ2A)
'It is very uplifting that our immediate supervisor encourages us to serve despite unjust compensation.'
(FGD19_RQ2A)

Also, informants shared that establishing a strong linkage among partner agencies is a great help:

‘Reinforcement from their partner agencies helped them, especially since they only have limited manpower.’
(FGD6_RQ2C)

The informants revealed how they cope with the challenges in the PDRRMOCs in Davao Region with limited infrastructure. Resource efficiency, positive resource management, and personnel empowerment and reinforcement are the major themes that transpired.

Resource efficiency is another key concept to explore when talking about sustainably utilizing limited resources without hampering the services to offer. If the OpCen has limited resources at hand, this concept aims to efficiently use the resources available which results in a positive effect. Also, resource efficiency contributes not only to the sustainable operation of OpCen but at the same time helps conserve resources.

Moreover, positive resource management also helps to allocate resources to maximize efficiency. This is a process of optimizing the resources through pre-planning and allocation. It allows maximization of the resources to their best use to improve outcomes and boost efficiency.

Lastly, personnel empowerment and reinforcement are clever actions to boost self-esteem among personnel and the community. These can instill greater trust and confidence in the workforce. Acknowledging their needs and motivating them can encourage them to perform well despite the challenges encountered.

Given the DRRMOC's need for resources, providing the appropriate and sufficient infrastructure can help to make efficient and effective performance of the OpCen. Resource requirements such as the availability of funds for the procurement of critical equipment and conducting Communication and Emergency Operations Center training to duty OpCen personnel will also provide the assurance of reliable information and actions. The administration may also consider exploring alternative energy sources, such as solar or wind power, to ensure continuous operations during power outages since reliable and sustainable energy sources are crucial for the functioning of disaster management centers. It is also helpful to revisit the NDRRMC-DILG-DBM JMC 2014-1 which required the LDRRMOs to conduct monitoring and mobilize instrumentalities, facilities, and resources as well as the requirement to establish LDRRMOC.

Aspirations for the PDRRMOCs in the Davao Region regarding its limitations

Over the past decades, studies have underscored the vital role of employees' contribution to organizational effectiveness. They added that because of today's dynamic and accelerated environment, organizations rely heavily on employees' creative input to outperform and offer better services. Hence, it is important to support the aspirations of the personnel to increase motivation and address organizational needs (Maningo & Phyu, 2023). Everyone aspires to be effective for the wellbeing of the workplace and the entire community as well (Buot, 2017; Buot and Dulce, 2019, Buot and Montecalbo-Ignacio, 2021).

To get comprehensive answers about the aspirations for the PDRRMOCs in the Davao Region with limited infrastructure, there are two separate probing questions utilized during the in-depth interviews and FGD. For DRRMOC personnel: *Being a DRRMOC personnel, what are your goals aside from the duties, functions, and responsibilities stipulated in the DRRM policies and guidelines?*

For the victims of catastrophes: *As a victim, what DRRMOC do you hope to have in your local government unit?*

The informants' answers revealed three main themes that surfaced out of the in- depth interviews and FGD. These are the aspirations identified by the informants for the PDRRMOCs in the Davao Region with limited infrastructure: provision of standard resource requirements; strengthened capacity development; and sufficient budget allocation.

It was evident that the PDRRMOCs in the Davao Region need improvement because it does not have the standard resource requirements. Informant Nelson (KII12_IDIRQ3A) expressed his hopes to have a fully provided OpCen:

‘With the advancement of technology, I do hope that the administration will integrate modern and innovative technologies that will help our operations.’
(KII12_IDIRQ3A)

A more effective and efficient OpCen comes next after a well-established OpCen. However, this was not the same in the case of the informants when they shared their hopes for their OpCen:

‘I hope that we will soon use advanced data analytics, early warning devices, and more information and communication equipment in our OpCen just like others who use it. So, we will not be left behind.’
(KII20_IDIRQ3A)

‘I hope that the administration will see how important DRRMOC is and will prioritize its needs.’
(KII16_IDIRQ3B)

‘I expect them to construct the facility soon so that we can use the evacuation center for its purpose.’
(KII23_IDIRQ3B)

‘I only wish to have a more reliable and efficient communication network that will work despite bad weather.’
(FGD15_RQ3A)

The next major theme that surfaced from the responses was to strengthen capacity development. Based on his observations, Informant Chris (KII17_RQ3B) expressed his high hopes for the personnel, especially for the responders, of the OpCen:

‘They are provided with enough training. Unfortunately, most of them are Job Order employees. And since they also have personal needs for their families, some of them prefer to look for a more stable job.’
(KII17_RQ3B)

Also, capacitating the OpCen, especially the personnel, will immensely result in a more productive outcome. Informants shared that they hope for the betterment of the OpCen:

‘Since I am new in the service, I hope that I can attend more trainings so I can learn and be confident in my field.’
(FGD11_RQ3A)

In addition, informants expressed their sentiments that it is best to know the personnel's capacity to address what is really needed:

'I hope they will consider the strengths and weaknesses of their personnel, so they can provide them with what they need.'
(FGD23_RQ3B)

More so, informant Annie (KII16_RQ3B) firmly believed that the community plays a crucial role in creating a disaster-resilient environment:

'I hope they will conduct more activities in which we can participate since we will always be the first to respond in our community in times of disaster.'
(KII16_RQ3B)

Lastly, the informants revealed that they also aspire for a sufficient budget allocation. Also, it is best to find out that the allocations for disasters and emergencies are prioritized and not altered to any projects by the local government units. Informant Castro (FGD3_RQ3A) was firm when he expressed that it is vital to allocate what is intended for the OpCen:

'If only there was enough budget allocation for the OpCen, then it would be much easier for us to buy. Like, even if it is just a load for our mobile hotline. There are so many documents to prepare.'
(FGD3_RQ3A)

Correspondingly, informants shared their sentiments for the responders of the OpCen knowing how crucial their work is in times of emergency:

'They must look into the considerations of the responders. They are not insured and at the same time, they are only minimum wage earners, or worse not.'
(FGD12_RQ3B)

The informants revealed that their aspirations for the PDRRMOCs in the Davao Region with limited infrastructure are the provision of standard resource requirements, strengthened capacity development, and a sufficient budget allocation. These aspirations are significant to know and understand to create definable motives to stimulate possible efforts and resources toward achieving the goal.

The provision of standard resource requirements will make OpCen a more competent facility that can perform its tasks, duties, and functions during normal situations or even in times of emergencies. With these, the OpCen can provide a more reliable service to the community.

Also, any form of capacity development activity can equip anyone with the right competencies to perform its functions. In addition, efficacy and efficiency at work are a complement to relevant development programs. Hence, strengthening capacity development will enable the OpCen to improve its culture and system.

Moreover, a well-established OpCen needs a sufficient budgetary allocation. If it is intended to have a good and reliable service, then allocation of appropriate funding. It is said to be allocated since it is to provide the maximum amount of funding that will be spent on the needed and required resources. Thus, sufficient budgetary allocation without realignment is necessary.

These results show that DRRMOC personnel and even the community aspire for more effective and efficient delivery of service and performance at work. It is vital to distinguish their essential needs in operating an OpCen. Buot & Montecalbo-Ignacio (2021) emphasized that learning personnel aspirations motivates them the actualization to contribute more. El Baroudi et al. (2018) agreed that once aspirations are

identified, career paths can be formed to help employees reach their goals. Also, allowing employees to express their perspectives about the situation builds a collaborative approach, confidence, and a realistic picture of the desired outputs (Bhawtankar, 2019). Moreover, studies shown that employees with work-related aspirations remind organizations to provide right culture which is vital to employees to explore a more aligned career growth (Grant and Parker, 2009). And this right culture increases employee’s motivation to address organizational needs. Recognizing employee’s aspirations creates opportunities for them to enhance their job-related abilities and develop career self- management skills.

Given this exploration, the management may consider aspiring to strategically develop essential infrastructure that aligns with the specific needs of the region. This could include investing in resilient buildings, communication systems, and early warning mechanisms that are adaptable to the limited infrastructure context. Moreso, the administration may aim to be a center of excellence by investing in continuous capacity building and professional development for PDRRMOC staff. This includes training programs, workshops, and partnerships with educational institutions to ensure a skilled and knowledgeable workforce. Thus, it is also appropriate to include in the LDRRMP the procurement of additional physical requirements for the OpCen to be able to update and sustain its functions.

Strengthening PDRRMOC’s Preparedness for the next disaster considering its limitations

Disaster preparedness plays an important role in building resiliency which consists of a set of measures undertaken by the government, organization, community, or an individual to respond and cope with the aftermath of a disaster. According to UNDRR (2008), strengthening preparedness is mainly concerned with two objectives: increasing the capacity to predict, monitor, and be prepared to reduce damage or address potential threats; and to respond in an emergency, and assist those who have been adversely affected. Thus, strengthening preparedness has an essential role to play in saving lives and livelihoods which must be integrated into a disaster risk reduction approach.

The following probing questions were used to stimulate informants’ thoughts about strengthening PDRRMOC’s preparedness for the next disaster considering the limited infrastructure and other limitations: *What interventions or actions should be taken to become a proactive and disaster-resilient community? How can we achieve those?*

The informants’ responses revealed two major themes supported by the core ideas. These are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Strengthening PDRRMOC’s preparedness for the next disaster considering its limitations.

Major Themes	Core Ideas
Involvement of the stakeholders	Involve local communities in disaster risk reduction efforts Strengthen and escalate linkages
The practice of practical actions	Establish a localized, community-based early warning system Capacity development of Operations Center personnel Regularized job order personnel Employment of experiences Development of operating procedures according to capacity Conduct comprehensive assessment

The major themes are the informants' ideas on how to strengthen the PDRRMOC's preparedness despite having limitations. These are the involvement of the stakeholders and the practice of practical actions.

The first theme that emerged during the in-depth interviews and FGD is the involvement of the stakeholders. It is believed that community involvement is an innovative action. Informant Hassy (KII24_IDIRQ4) believed that the community has a vital role to play in lessening the impacts of disaster and for them not to suffer again:

'I believe that our involvement in any DRRM-related actions is a great help to make the community a more disaster-resilient one.'
(KII24_IDIRQ4)

During FGD, the informants also supported the idea:

'It is also better if there is a widespread connection among agencies that could also aid in creating a disaster-resilient community.'
(FGD7_RQ4)

The next major theme generated from the informants' responses is the practice of practical actions. They are positive that practical actions are a sustainable solution. Informant Romy (KII18_IDIRQ4) expressed that locals have useful resources:

'The community, especially the indigenous peoples, has its localized warning signals that are long-used and are still beneficial and reliable.'
(KII18_IDIRQ4)

Capacitating the community is a practical solution that creates a disaster-resilient community. As informant Prezel (KII21_IDIRQ4) shared:

'With the help of the training conducted by the PDRRMO, there are now responders on the ground who can help them.'
(KII21_IDIRQ4)

Also, the informants revealed the same ideas during the FGD:

'It is more viable if we have a 'plantilla' position since the office has already invested in us with trainings.'
(FGD4_RQ4)

'Considering limitations in planning actions to be taken is also feasible. Through this, we can prepare for the possibilities that may take place.'
(FGD13_RQ4)

'The conduct of CDRA is important. It will give you comprehensive data that is important for crafting the DRRM plan.'
(FGD21_RQ4)

Moreover, the informants shared that their experience taught them the importance of capacitating oneself:

‘Despite the tragic and terrifying experience, we had back then, it helped us realize the importance of basic life skills and survival.’
(FGD8_RQ4)

Involvement of the stakeholders and the practice of practical actions are the informants’ thoughts on strengthening PDRRMOC’s preparedness for the next disaster considering the limited infrastructure and other limitations.

Disaster preparedness plays an important role in building resiliency which consists of a set of measures undertaken by the government, organizations, community, or an individual. Also, the existing and well-functioning systems are substantial to continue to create resiliency. Hence, the involvement of the stakeholders is a coordinated participation that is an important factor to consider in the development. And the practice of practical actions can help become prepared to reduce the impact of a disaster or address potential threats.

Strengthening preparedness is mainly concerned with two objectives: increasing the capacity to predict, monitor, and be prepared to reduce damages or address potential threats; and to respond in an emergency and assist those who have been adversely affected (UNDRR, 2008). Thus, the results conform to Humeau’s (2022) claim that strengthening disaster preparedness also includes the improvement of both technology innovations and partnerships with other institutions. Developing and integrating comprehensive tools; elaborating on working procedures, protocols, and guidelines; strengthening local governments and institutions’ capacity by improving monitoring systems; and increasing resilience of the communities located in the areas at greatest risk of disaster is a necessity. Hence, stepping up actions and investments in preparedness now is necessary rather than just waiting for the next disaster to hit.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Today, DRRMOCs are under a lot of strain. The pressure to operate fully despite limited resources. Nonetheless, these DRRMOCs respond to difficult events with appropriate coping methods. The findings of this study revealed that these DRRMOCs face issues such as reduced productivity, work inefficiency, and burnout among staff operating the DRRMOC due to inadequate resources. As a result, this demonstrates that this occurrence has a significant impact on DRRMOC’s performance, which in turn influences OpCen preparedness. However, these DRRMOCs have been shown to employ coping mechanisms such as resource efficiency, positive resource management, and personnel empowerment and reinforcement. As a result, these DRRMOCs in the Davao Region prefer to rely on familiar solutions as coping mechanisms to help them deal with the obstacles of operating the OpCen. On the contrary, if the DRRMOC fails to address the issues, it might have a direct impact on the delivery of quality services.

Furthermore, these DRRMOCs seek to meet standard resource requirements, promote capacity development, and allocate enough budgets. These goals are intended to eliminate the difficulties they have faced while operating the OpCen. In other words, these DRRMOCs strive for high-quality service. This will create disaster-resilient communities in the Davao region. Thus, these are required to assist and support the emergency response.

The shared the involvement of stakeholders, and practicing practical actions strengthen preparedness despite having limitations. These insights are seen to reinforce the DRRMOC in its operation with the challenges at hand. Thus, scaling up the existing and well-functioning systems is a significant key

to continuing to build resilience. Moreover, management may forge partnerships with non-governmental organizations and the private sector to access additional resources, expertise, and technology will foster collaboration on community projects that enhance resilience, such as building infrastructure that serves dual purposes.

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