



JOURNEYING WITH CHILDREN TOWARD A RESILIENT BASECO

A Case Study on Child-Focused Disaster Risk Reduction in the Philippines

I. OVERVIEW

This case study documents children and youth's participation in a local urban disaster risk reduction program in the Philippines. It identifies drivers of good practices and the lessons learned in the process. This case study focuses on BASECO, an urban poor community situated in a reclaimed area of Manila City, the capital of the Philippines. It is considered one of the largest urban slums in the Philippines. An overcrowded coastal community, BASECO has a population of almost 73,000 individuals (51% of whom are children) or 24,690 families¹ who are mostly informal settlers with limited access to quality basic services. The community of BASECO is highly vulnerable to disasters, which has resulted in a long history of repeated displacement. Residents are also at risk of eviction or relocation due to insecurity of land tenure.

World Vision is among the numerous non-government organizations² working with the community of BASECO. The organization has been in the area since 2002, providing a myriad of community development services³ in the sectors of education, child protection, livelihood, WaSH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene), solid waste management, and child-focused disaster risk reduction (CF-DRR).⁴ Through interviews with youth leaders, barangay officials and World Vision staff, this case study zooms into the experience of BASECO and highlights World Vision's two-pronged approach to developing and implementing a CF-DRR program in the community.

World Vision's two-pronged approach first entailed advocacy and influencing work. This involved both the local government unit (LGU) and other civil society organizations (CSOs) present in the area, which was necessary to ensure that children's needs and capacities were at the center of disaster risk reduction. Advocacy and influencing work were also important for establishing policy infrastructures, particularly in accessing local funding and gaining the

government's buy-in and support, which were needed to implement and sustain disaster risk reduction initiatives in BASECO.

Another component in World Vision's two-pronged approach was child participation, or the facilitation of the inclusion of children, in the process of building up mechanisms and plans to reduce, prepare for, and respond to disaster. This was achieved through organizing children's groups and ensuring representation of children in important decision-making platforms, such as in the local government's Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) Council.

In the following sections, we examine the causes for BASECO's disaster vulnerability, outline how the CF-DRR program was implemented in the area, and reflect on the key learnings and best practices learned.

II. BASECO'S DISASTER VULNERABILITY

The cause of BASECO's disaster vulnerability is multi-faceted. BASECO's physical and geographical situation, as well as its built environment, make it directly and highly exposed to various urban shocks, including disasters. It is situated in 48 hectares of poorly reclaimed land around the Manila Bay. Composed of thousands of housing structures, it is highly vulnerable to both natural and man-made disasters, such as liquefaction, flooding, tsunami, earthquake, storm surge and fire, as seen in Figure 1.

Because BASECO is a reclaimed area, it is prone to liquefaction. There is also the risk of storm surge, as BASECO is located along Manila Bay and houses near the bay are flooded with seawater during high-tide and typhoon season. BASECO is also located along the Manila Trench, which makes it at high risk of tsunami in the event of a

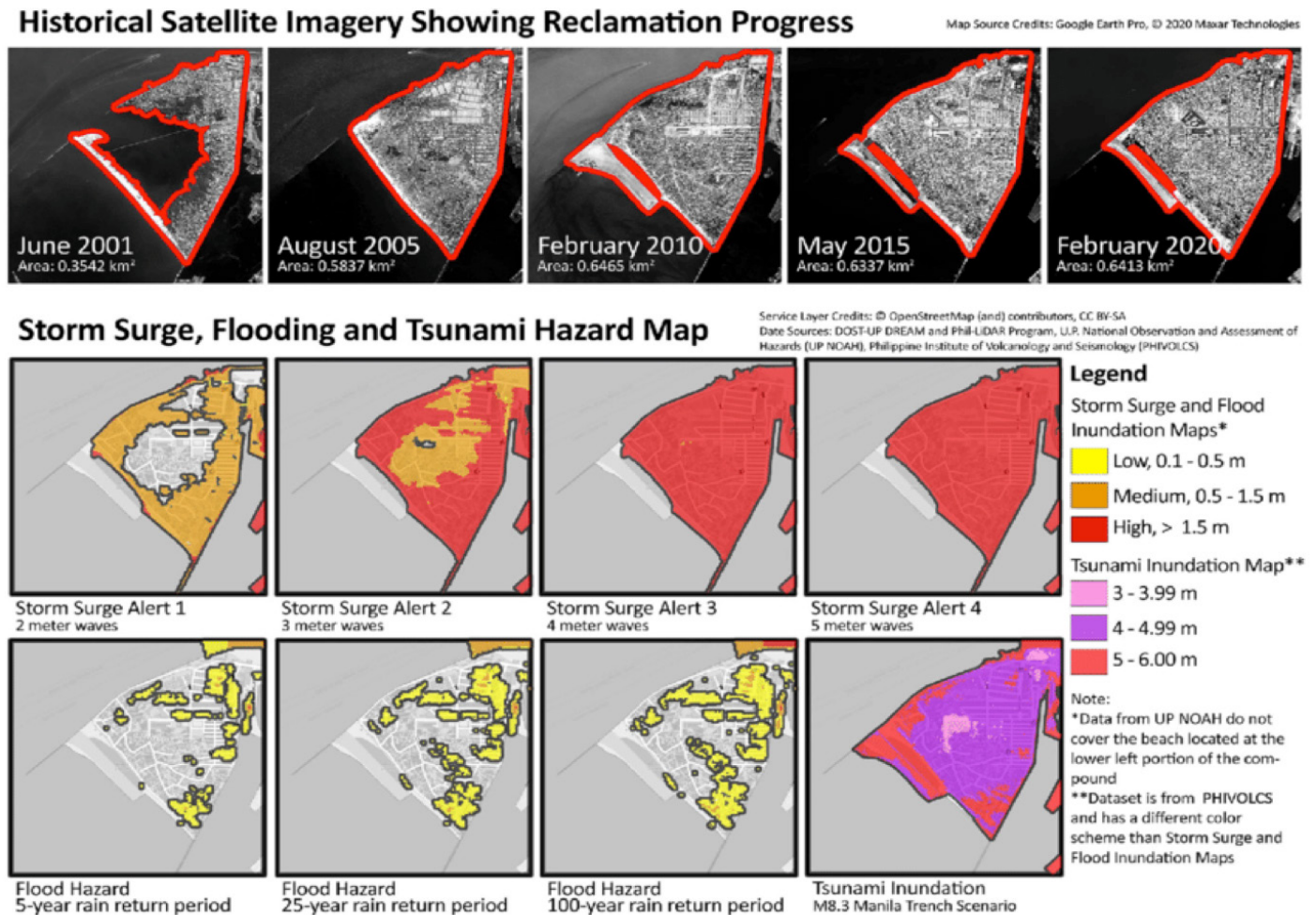
¹ Population data of BASECO as of March 2020, which the barangay LGU used in their COVID-19 response to ensure that every household is accounted for and provided with the necessary support, especially during lockdown. "Hidden" vulnerable populations, such as street dwellers and the homeless, are not present in the BASECO community.

² Other organizations include Caritas Manila, Kaibigan Outreach Foundation, ChildHope Philippines, Hope Worldwide Philippines, Lingap Pangkabataan Inc., Tulay ng Kabataan Foundation Inc., Urban Poor Associates, ERDA Foundation, UPLIFT Philippines, World Mission Community Center, Homeowners Associations, etc.

³ Child sponsorship, child protection (Prevent-Respond-Restore) and advocacy, early childhood development, provision of school supplies and digital learning tools, reading camps and after school tutoring, life skills and youth development training, values education/spiritual nurture training, bridge to employment opportunities, entrepreneurship and financial literacy training for households, connecting MSMEs to the market through local value chain development, urban gardening training including provision of seeds, income generation from solid waste, proper waste management and recycling training, WaSH facilities and provision of sanitation/hygiene kits (during COVID-19 pandemic)

⁴ Child focused DRR interventions were implemented in BASECO from 2015 to 2018.

Figure 1. Maps of BASECO Showing Reclamation Progress and Hazard Maps for Storm Surge, Flooding and Tsunami



Source: Valenzuela, Estaban & Motoharu (2020)⁵

powerful earthquake, such as the “Big One.”⁶ Incidence of fire is frequent as well, as the area is congested with overloaded electrical outlets and most houses in BASECO are made of light, flammable materials. Given the multitude of hazards it faces every year, it can be claimed that BASECO had some level of disaster preparedness. However, it was limited given the community’s high vulnerability to disasters and their low capacity to mitigate them.

The BASECO community’s limited access to quality basic services and livelihood opportunities also contribute to their

vulnerability. Despite the area’s proximity to major government agencies and central business districts, this does not necessarily translate into accessibility, especially for the most vulnerable. The majority of the settlers in BASECO are daily wage earners who have low-income, insecure jobs. Informal labor, which is unsustainable, is among the major sources of income in the area. Many BASECO residents work as street vendors, construction workers, tricycle/ pedicab/jeepney drivers, sari-sari store owners and domestic helpers, among others.

⁵ Valenzuela, V., Estaban, M., & Motoharu, O. (2020). Perceptions of Disasters and Land Reclamation in an Informal Settlement on Reclaimed Land: Case of the BASECO Compound, Manila Philippines. *International Journal of Disaster Risk Science*, 11 (15).

⁶ “The “Big One” is a worst-case scenario of a 7.2-magnitude earthquake from the West Valley Fault, a 100-kilometer fault that runs through six cities in Metro Manila and nearby provinces. A tsunami is also foreseen in the scenario set by the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS):” (Llanza, M.A. (n.d.). Cavite province talks about preparing for the “Big One.” Humanitarian Leadership Academy. Retrieved December 3, 2021, from <https://www.humanitarianleadershipacademy.org/the-big-one/>)



The community also has limited access to quality education (i.e. a 1:45 classroom-pupil ratio⁷) and healthcare (i.e. only one functioning health center). Poor sanitation and waste management are also everyday problems that contribute to disaster vulnerability and exposure to health risks (such as urinary tract infection and worm infection) among children in BASECO. Additionally, there is limited assistance for providing adequate shelter. The precarious living conditions in the community (i.e. lack of decent housing, limited space and overcrowding) expose children to sexual and physical violence.

Given the context of BASECO as an urban poor, land insecure, and highly vulnerable community, many NGOs, faith-based organizations, and people's organizations have sought to help through a variety of development projects and relief efforts. World Vision is among these organizations.

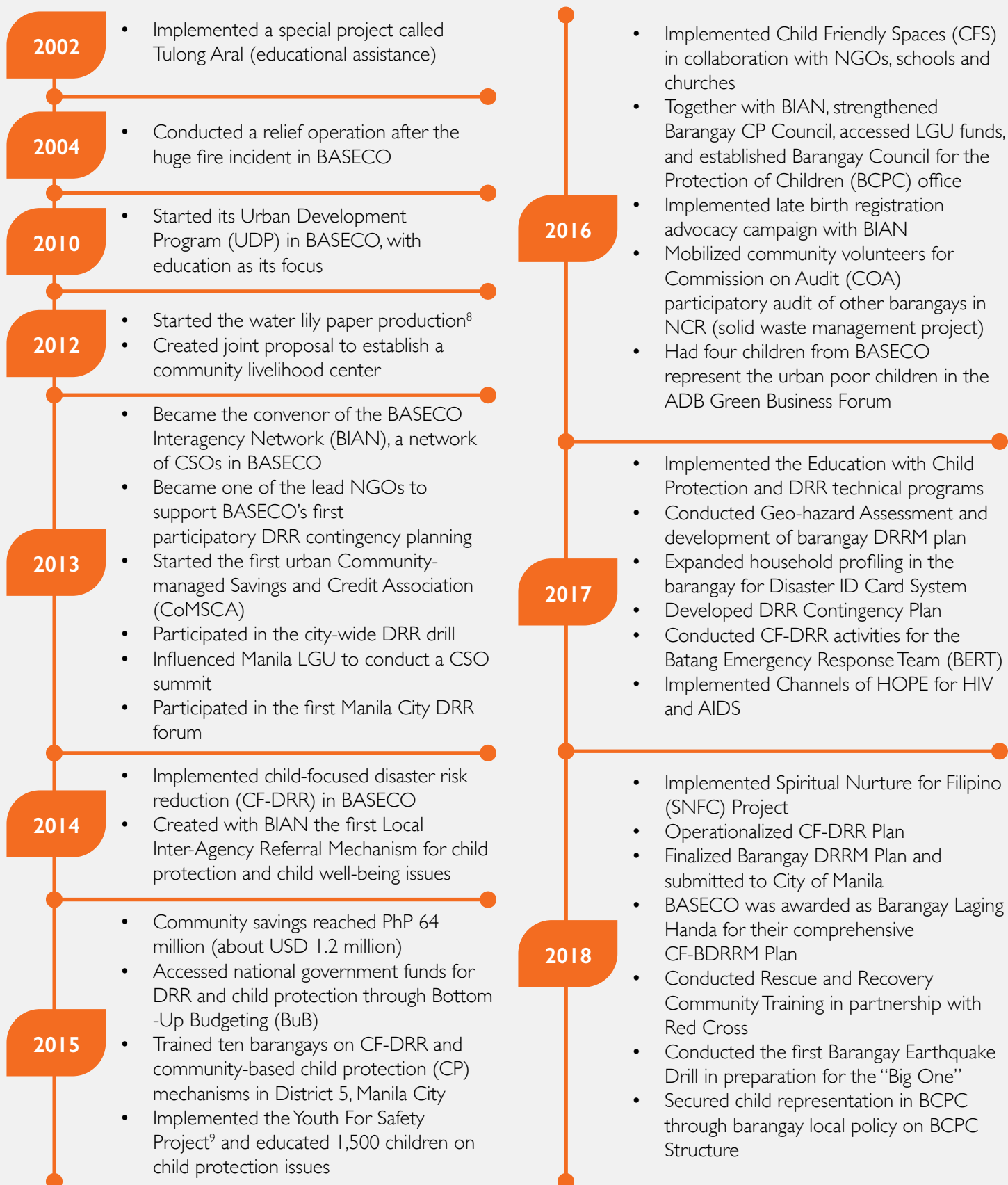
III. IMPLEMENTING CHILD-FOCUSED DISASTER RISK REDUCTION (CF-DRR) IN BASECO

World Vision started its work in BASECO through educational assistance in 2002 and a relief operation following a massive fire incident in 2004 (see Table 1). At the time, World Vision did not prioritize implementing programs in BASECO as a number of NGOs and people's organizations were already present in the area. However, World Vision's existing relationship with the community and its assessment of the needs of the community's children pushed the organization to develop and implement the Urban Development Program (UDP) in 2010.

However, there was no dedicated funding for DRR initiatives in the UDP program. The program focused on sponsorship and education, which mainly included the provision of learner kits or school supplies, setup of reading camps, after school tutoring, and life skills and values formation training, among others. Funding was mostly allocated for the provision of these educational services. Meanwhile, DRR was only seen as a contributor for establishing an enabling and supportive environment for children.

⁷ H.J. Atienza Elementary School and Sen. Benigno Aquino Elementary School reports, SY 2018-2019.

Table 1. Timeline of World Vision's Work in BASECO



⁸ Water lilies cause flooding in BASECO by way of clogging the waterways.

⁹ In partnership with the Philippine Children's Ministries Network (PCMN).

Table 1. Timeline of World Vision's Work in BASECO (continued)

2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implemented Digital Education Project with partner school Implemented Municipal Waste Recycling Project, funded by USAID Implemented Citibank's Empowerment through Entrepreneurship Program Integrated World Vision Life Skills Module in the Values Education Curriculum of partner schools Conducted Child Protection Reporting and Referral Mechanism Training for barangay tanods and health workers
2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalized BASECO Child Protection Reporting and Referral Mechanism Pathway Drafted the barangay ordinance on Anti-Trafficking In Persons Launched the Brigada Pagbasa project Implemented WaSH projects funded by Lexus and Bank of America Launched COVID-19 Emergency Response
2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implemented the Bridge to Employment Project in partnership with Czech Embassy Provided modules and printing equipment to schools in support of DepEd's Learning Continuity Plan Provided educational support to non-WV registered children in partnership with Globe Platinum Conducted the first Virtual Community Visit of BASECO for WV board members and partners

Figure 2. World Vision Cities for Children Framework



The World Vision area program team in BASECO had extensive knowledge and experience in disaster risk reduction and management work. They understood that development programs would be unsustainable if the community continued to be unprepared for disasters. In fact, **Resilient Cities** is one of the four domains of change in World Vision's *Cities for Children (CFC) Framework*.¹⁰

¹⁰ 'Cities for Children' is World Vision's framework for addressing children's vulnerabilities in urban contexts. It is anchored in World Vision's child well-being aspirations, links with tested urban approaches developed by various UN agencies i.e. UN-HABITAT, UNISDR, UNICEF, WHO and The World Bank, and is strongly aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The framework consists of four interrelated domains of change affecting child wellbeing in cities: health, safety, resilience and prosperity. Underpinning these domains is the enabling factor of advocacy to seek justice and inclusion of the most vulnerable through policy change.

Promoting just and inclusive cities where children thrive in safe, healthy, resilient and prosperous environments



Recognizing the critical role that resilience plays in the well-being of children living in urban areas, especially in disaster prone parts, World Vision aimed to ensure children and their families are prepared to respond to, recover and rebuild from urban shocks, stressors and vulnerabilities. Despite the lack of funding for DRR, the area program team capitalized on existing structures and devised ways to help the BASECO community build their disaster risk reduction and management plans and initiatives.

World Vision advanced child-focused disaster risk reduction in BASECO in two ways. First, World Vision sought multi-sectoral and local government partnership to gain the support of the LGU and CSOs in establishing and implementing DRR initiatives. Second, World Vision fostered child participation in the process. World Vision's area program team ensured that BASECO's DRR plans and initiatives were both functional and inclusive, particularly to the needs and capacities of the community's children.

I. Local government and multi-sectoral partnerships to advance disaster risk reduction

When World Vision started its Urban Development Program (UDP) in 2010, BASECO did not have consolidated and comprehensive disaster risk reduction and management plans, structures or programs. Their existing disaster response mechanisms were not organized or functional and opportunities for citizens to participate in governance structures were limited, especially for children. The LGU admitted that they had not prioritized DRR programs before due to limited funding, as well as reliance on their experience and ability to withstand several disasters in the past years.

When Typhoon Haiyan — the strongest typhoon recorded in recent years — struck the Philippines in 2013, the local government of BASECO realized the massive need for disaster preparedness. They reflected that if BASECO is struck by a similar typhoon, the area could easily be wiped out. This led them to approach World Vision and seek support in building and implementing a DRR program. Unfortunately, World Vision had no dedicated funding for DRR initiatives in BASECO, as existing programs were focused on sponsorship and education. This reality, however, did not constrain World Vision in helping BASECO with disaster risk reduction. Instead, World Vision pooled resources by capitalizing on the existing network and capacity of the community, as well as the prevailing structures and assets of the LGU.

MULTI-SECTORAL PARTNERSHIPS THROUGH THE BASECO INTERAGENCY NETWORK (BIAN)

Figure 3. BIAN logo



Multi-sectoral partnership played a key role in mobilizing funds for BASECO's disaster risk reduction plans and program. World Vision was appointed as the convenor of the BASECO Interagency Network (BIAN) in 2013. BIAN is a network of people's organizations, civil society organizations (CSOs), faith-based

groups and government units working in BASECO, established in 2004. In collaboration with BIAN members, World Vision pooled resources and addressed community issues that affected child well-being, including disaster risk reduction.

While a platform like BIAN allowed different CSOs to come together and opened a space for various advocacies, World Vision and other child-focused NGOs also had to influence network members to take a child-focused approach to their services, given their differing sectoral focuses. World Vision's expertise in child well-being programming brought in a child-centered lens to community development. By focusing on the needs of children and bringing partners together to improve and sustain their well-being, World Vision influenced the creation of a child-focused disaster risk reduction program in BASECO. World Vision also shared tools and frameworks, such as the Child-Focused Disaster Risk Reduction (CF-DRR) module that was used in trainings and workshops with BIAN members, the LGU and children.

INSTITUTIONAL BUY-IN THROUGH BOTTOM-UP BUDGETING (BUB)

Thanks to the strong partnership and collaborative work between the local government, BIAN members, and World Vision, they were able to secure the necessary funding to jumpstart BASECO's child-focused disaster risk reduction initiatives through the Philippine government's Bottom-Up

Budgeting (BuB).¹¹ In 2015, BIAN, on behalf of the BASECO community, submitted four project proposals¹² applying for the BuB program of Manila City and DSWD-NCR. All four projects were approved for funding, including the Child-Focused Disaster Risk Reduction (CF-DRR) project.

Through the BuB, BASECO was awarded PhP 600,000 (approximately USD 11,650) to implement the CF-DRR project. It aimed to promote community awareness about disaster risk reduction and increase community participation in the planning and implementation process. Specifically, the project had three objectives: (1) equip ten high risk barangays to facilitate child-focused disaster risk reduction in their own communities, (2) increase child participation in the formulation and implementation of the barangay's disaster risk reduction management plan, and (3) improve the emergency response mechanism for disasters.

As the project implementation lead, World Vision was one of the resource speakers in the Training of Trainers (ToT), disaster risk reduction workshop for children, and joint Barangay Disaster Risk Reduction Management (BDRRM) planning. These activities were conducted from March to August 2015. Overall, the project sought to help address disaster prevention, mitigation and preparedness (by assisting them in the risk assessment), risk analysis and the planning process for implementing the focused thematic areas.

The project adopted a community-based approach, working closely with local and community partners in the various elements and phases of disaster response. It was based on the Philippines' National Disaster Risk Reduction Management framework and covers disaster prevention, mitigation and preparedness. By law, the government formulates and implements the National DRRM plan. They ensure that the physical, socio-economic and environmental plans of the region, provinces, cities and municipalities are aligned and consistent with the plan and framework. This framework was used to address the issues and gaps in the implementation of DRRM initiatives in BASECO.

¹¹ BuB, launched in 2012, is a legacy of the Aquino Administration, which ensured the inclusion of the funding required for the development needs of the poorest cities and municipalities in the budget proposals of national government agencies. This approach made the planning and budgeting process of both the local and national governments in the Philippines more participatory through the genuine involvement of grassroots organizations and communities, thereby strengthening the convergence of the delivery of national services in the community.

¹² The BuB project proposals submitted and approved for funding were on child protection, birth registration, livelihood, and child-focused disaster risk reduction.

2. Opening spaces for child participation in disaster risk reduction

While there was already a growing recognition for the importance of disaster risk reduction in BASECO after Typhoon Haiyan, World Vision advocated for the building of inclusive and child-focused disaster risk reduction plans and mechanisms to BIAN members and the LGU. In practice, child-focused disaster risk reduction (CF-DRR) means prioritizing children and youth in all processes to ensure that child rights, well-being and participation are well integrated (as presented in the section *Mapping out children and youth's participation in disaster risk reduction* on pp. 10-14).

At the same time, this model uses a multi-stakeholder and inclusive approach to capacity building, wherein environmental, social and attitudinal barriers are considered and addressed before, during, and after the training. This is to guarantee maximum and meaningful participation of all learners and facilitators. This model also seeks to create a safe environment, one where children and adults have the opportunity to be heard and speak about their rights, needs and responsibilities.

Different tools for participatory disaster assessment, analysis and planning were also utilized. The results were translated into action plans for disaster prevention, mitigation and preparedness.

ADDRESSING MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

The World Vision area program team recalled that part of the process of building a child-focused disaster risk reduction program included listening to misconceptions about the role of children and youth in disaster risk reduction. In one of the training sessions of the CF-DRR module, spearheaded by World Vision, this was discussed openly among local government representatives, teachers and other adults. They acknowledged that they tended to impose on children, rather than consult and encourage their participation.

Table 2 shows a snapshot of adults' preconceived notions about children and youth in disaster risk reduction. On the one hand, stakeholders perceived children as vulnerable, with limited capacity to contribute to disaster risk reduction efforts. This notion came from a place of care, as

adults wanted to take responsibility for the safety of children during disasters. Another preconceived notion was that children are a burden during the response phase. This notion came from their limited understanding of disaster risk reduction as solely about rescue and response, which could be dangerous for children to do by themselves.

Table 2. Session Inputs from the CF-DRR Module

Traditional views of children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gifts from God • Wanted, desired and enjoyed • Sources of emotional and financial security • Should be given love, care and protection
Dominant views of children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Naturally weak, passive, ignorant, irrational, incomplete, incompetent, immature, etc. • Better seen and not heard • Properties of their parents and guardians
Emerging views of children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on children's strength rather than their vulnerabilities • Value what children can do and not what they cannot do • Recognize their rights as children • Recognize that children are social actors and active participants in social change

Source: Documentation: *Bottom-Up Budgeting Barangay 649, BASECO Port Area* (pp. 8-9)

Understanding adults' perceptions about children and youth and their role in disaster risk reduction helped World Vision think of ways to promote awareness about children's rights and capabilities among local government representatives, civil society partners, and even schools. During the CF-DRR Training of Trainers (ToT), emerging views of children that focus on children's strengths, rights, and capacity to contribute to social change were discussed, and used to challenge adults' traditional and dominant views of children.

However, World Vision recognized that challenging adults' dominant views of children was not a one-off process. World Vision constantly engaged community stakeholders in order



to emphasize why it is important to work with and help children realize their full potential. World Vision's community engagement also came in the form of co-initiating child-focused interventions, such as hosting the National Children's Month celebration and strengthening local structures for the protection of children, such as the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC).

While these programs were not about disaster risk reduction per se, they helped stakeholders to gradually grasp the idea that children have rights, capabilities, and roles in the community, including in disaster risk reduction. Facilitating this groundwork was necessary for opening space for child participation and helping adults become more receptive to children's ideas and concerns.

MAPPING OUT CHILDREN AND YOUTH'S PARTICIPATION IN DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Through the CF-DRR project, children and youth were actively engaged and played a key role in building up BASECO's disaster risk reduction plans and mechanisms. Teachers, LGU representatives, and the World Vision team

facilitated children's workshops using the CF-DRR tools. They utilized an inclusive and age-appropriate facilitation style, which was introduced during the Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop.

Workshop representatives included 12 school children and youth (seven girls, five boys) aged 9-17 years old in BASECO. They were encouraged to share their experiences, voice out their opinions, and share their ideas about disaster risk reduction through creative and lively activities. Children and youth used the community risk assessment tools that adults and LGU representatives also used, as seen in Table 3. These tools are the following: Risk Mapping, Organizations in my Place, Safe and Dangerous Place, Disaster Timeline, Understanding Livelihood in Our Place, My Needs, Before, During, and After a Disaster, Visioning of a Resilient Community, and Top 5 Problems and Solutions.

Table 3. Community Risk Assessment Tools

Community Risk Assessment Tool	Description
Risk mapping	A tool that allows community members to visually identify capacities and risks. It also enables community members to review their resource base and make an inventory of their capacities.
Organizations in My Place	This tool refers to the various organizations that exist in the community. It helps identify the parties who could potentially advance or hinder the development of the community. With this tool, children identify the organizations that could help them before, during and after an emergency or major disaster.
Safe and Dangerous Place	This tool asks children to draw and identify the safe and dangerous places inside and outside their homes and surroundings.
Disaster Timeline	This tool helps lay out the disasters that the community has experienced in previous years. It also demonstrates the repetitiveness and increased frequency of some disasters.
Understanding Livelihood in Our Place	This tool asks children about means of livelihood in the community. Participants enumerate the different types of livelihood in the community, explore the alternative livelihoods people get involved with during flood or rainy season, and identify problems associated with livelihood.
My Needs, Before, During and After a Disaster	This tool is a modelling clay activity that helps show the needs of children before, during and after a disaster.
Visioning of a Resilient Community	This tool facilitates discussion among children about how they envision a resilient and safe community via creative methods.
Top 5 Problems and Solutions	This tool asks children to identify primary problems that they face in their community.

Source: Documentation: Bottom-Up Budgeting Barangay 649, BASECO Port Area

Overall, the community risk assessment tools helped children and youth process their thoughts and feelings about the disasters they had experienced in BASECO, as well as identify their capacity, roles, and rights in disaster risk reduction. For example, during the Disaster Timeline exercise (Table 4), children and youth identified how the disasters they have experienced have impacted them. They recounted that these disasters were traumatic, made them fearful, caused the loss of loved ones, and disrupted their schooling. At the same time, the exercise allowed them to identify the lessons they learned, such as the need for their community to be better prepared in times of disasters.

In other exercises, such as Risk Mapping and Organizations in My Place, children identified LGU representatives, teachers, and other CSOs like World Vision as people who could help them before, during and after disaster. Children also noted that the lack of functional streetlights was a risk that children faced in the community and one that adults overlooked.

In the Understanding Our Livelihoods exercise, youth leaders recounted how the livelihood in the community exacerbated the disasters they experienced:

Isa sa mga naalala ko po na prinisent po namin ay yung mga works po ng mga parents po namin dito before calamities. Uso po kasi dito yung kukuha ng buhangin sa beach tapos binebenta. Bawal po pala iyon dahil nagkakaroon ng erosion. (Youth leader)

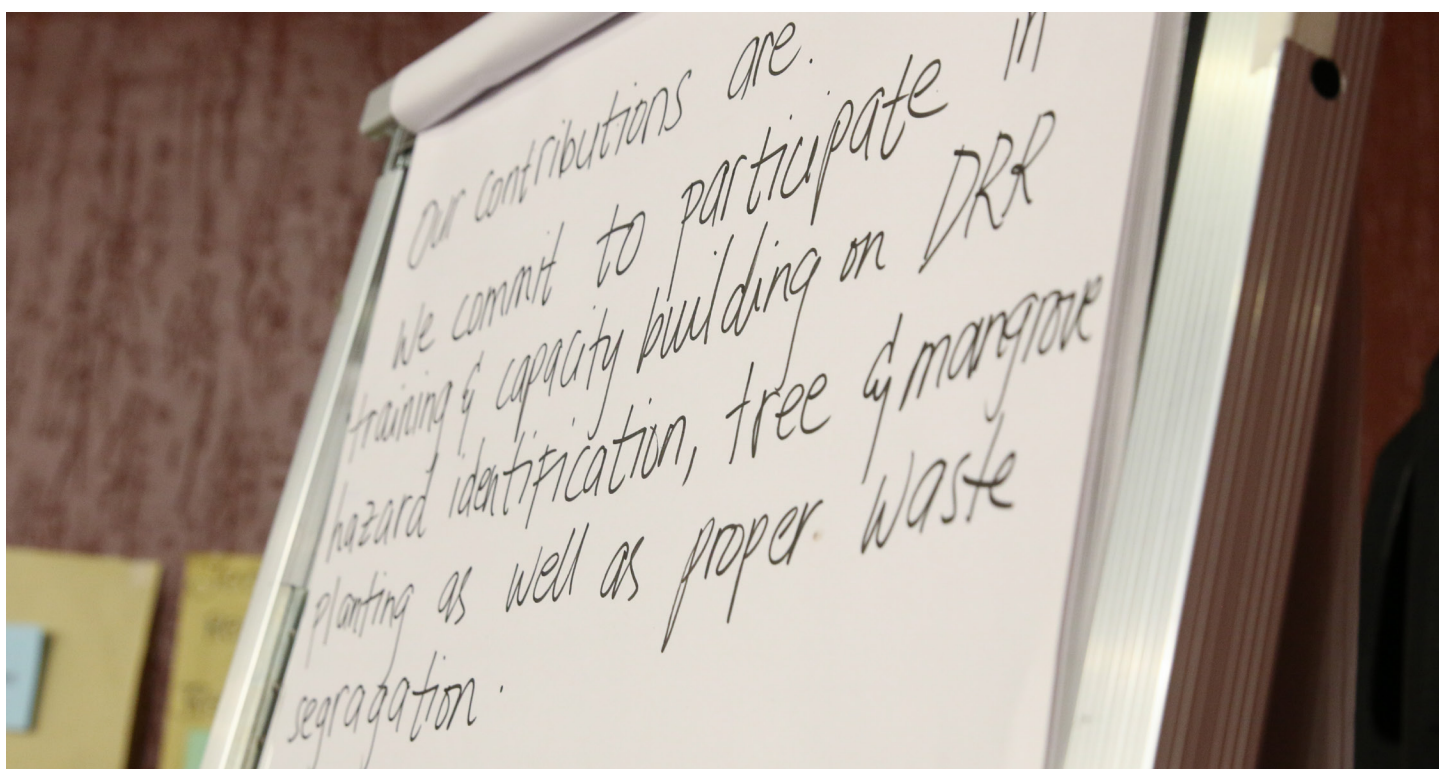
“[During the Understanding Our Livelihoods exercise], I recall discussing our parent’s livelihood before calamities. Beach sand mining used to be very popular here [as people’s source of income], but we found out that it is illegal because it causes erosion.” (Youth leader).

Following the Community Risk Assessment workshop, the outputs of the children were presented to LGU

Table 4. Session Inputs on Children’s Disaster Timeline

Year	Disaster	Impact to Community	Impact to Children	Assistance Received	Lessons Learned
2012	Southwest monsoon rains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flooding Damaged houses Lost possessions Lost livelihood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Got sick Felt scared Unable to go to school Lost school supplies Parents died 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relief goods School supplies Household items Feeding program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be ready and alert Follow authorities Evacuate voluntarily if needed
2013	Typhoon Glenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Several damaged houses Several damaged livelihoods Disrupted schooling Several got sick 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many children were traumatized Many children felt scared Many children got sick 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medicines Relief goods Feeding program Shelter assistance School supplies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Always be ready Know what to do Help the needy
2014	Fire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Several lost their homes Several residents experienced hardship Lost discipline Wasted/worthless possessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trauma Disrupted schooling Got sick 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relief goods Shelter assistance Medicines School supplies Scholarship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be careful Look out for damaged power lines and other fire hazards

Source: Documentation: Bottom-Up Budgeting Barangay 649, BASECO Port Area (p. 32)



representatives during the BDRRM Planning in April 2015.¹³ Child representatives, particularly Supreme Student Government Officers, discussed the most relevant and important issues, based on the Community Risk Assessment workshops they had conducted with other children.

First were health and environment-related issues, which included proper waste disposal and polluted environments that cause poor health conditions and illness among children. Second was education-related issues, as many children are out of school because of poverty and lack of financial resources. Third was peer pressure, which causes some children and youth to engage in vices. LGU representatives acknowledged the concerns brought forward by the children and outlined ways to address them, such as including plans to address waste disposal in the community and exploring partnerships with technical and vocational institutions for out-of-school youth.

Reflecting on their experience, youth leaders shared that having the opportunity to voice out their concerns to the LGU was empowering. However, they were conscious that not all of their suggestions were taken up. They noted that LGU representatives need to continue working with and listening to the children and youth of BASECO.

Tapos naisip ko rin po, sana naiintindihan nila kami. Sana naaabsorb nila yung mga sinsasabi namin sa kanila. At sana nakikinig sila sa mga hinaing namin hindi yung papasok dito, lalabas sa kabilang tenga, parang ganun. Pati po yung dreams po namin na walang kalamidad na mangyayari, lahat magtutulungan. Pina-realize po namin sa kanila na pakinggan niyo po kami... (Youth leader)

"I thought to myself, I hope they understood our concerns. I hope they really listened to what we were telling them. And I hope that they listened to our grievances—that these did not go in one ear and out the other—as well as our dreams of a calamity-free community, where everybody is helping one another. We made them realize the importance of listening to us children". (Youth leader)

The Community Risk Assessment that children conducted together with LGU representatives formed part of the disaster preparedness efforts in BASECO. Beyond this, children had also participated in different phases of BASECO's disaster risk reduction efforts, as seen in Table 5.

¹³ This particular experience of community engagement in decision-making processes for local-led advocacy exhibits **urban governance**, one of the four strategic pillars of World Vision's Cities for Children (CFC) Framework, which are essential components to achieving sustainable, large-scale, and transformational impact in urban centers. The other strategic pillars are social cohesion, knowledge building, and built environment.

Table 5. Mapping of Child Participation in Disaster Risk Reduction

Phase	Activities
Prevention and Mitigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children and youth groups were part of regular coastal and street clean-up drives and mangrove/tree-planting activities.
Preparedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Officers of Student Supreme Government (SSG) participated in barangay contingency planning and school DRR planning to identify the risks that children and youth face in their community. Teachers were also included in barangay contingency planning to identify how students can prepare in case of a tsunami. Barangay representatives conducted orientation in schools to promote awareness of disaster risk reduction and encourage students to develop family contingency plans. Schools conducted earthquake drills that were led and participated in by students.
Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Sangguniang Kabataan¹⁴ (SK) was tapped by barangay officials to manage and monitor evacuation sites and relay community feedback to the barangay chairperson. While in evacuation sites, the Camp Management Committee in the barangay conducted a film showing to distract children from the traumatic experience of being displaced due to flooding.
Recovery and Rehabilitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) participated in clean-up drives post-flooding.

Source: Online structured workshop with BASECO local government representatives

The table above is based on the structured online workshop done with BASECO's LGU representatives, which aimed to examine and validate how children participated in their community's DRR efforts. In the Prevention and Mitigation phase, children and youth were part of the clean-up drive and tree planting activities. In the Response phase, the Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) was tapped by barangay officials to manage and monitor evacuation sites, as well as relay community feedback to the barangay chairperson. Additionally, LGU representatives recalled that the Camp Management Committee conducted a film showing to distract and help children cope with the traumatic experience of being displaced due to flooding.

The LGU representatives noted that child participation was highest in disaster preparedness activities, but weakest in recovery and rehabilitation efforts. They noted that these are opportunities for them to maximize child participation in DRR. Moreover, the LGU representatives or adults, in general, recognized that child participation in DRR should remain safe, voluntary, inclusive, meaningful and appropriate for the children's age, ability and skills.

Ang mga kabataan po kasi ay may sapat na lakas ng pangangatawan (energy), aggressive at may mga

makabagong pananaw at pamamaraan na pwede nilang ma-contribute sa gawain ng barangay... (Local government representative).

"The youth are full of energy, they are enthusiastic [sic] and they have new ideas that can improve the conditions of our barangay." (LGU Representative)

ORGANIZING CHILDREN AND YOUTH LEADERS

World Vision deemed it important to mobilize children and youth leaders alongside the organizing of DRR mechanisms. Mobilizing children and youth leaders was crucial in ensuring representation of children and youth's needs in important governance structures, such as in the LGU's DRRM Council.

To achieve this, World Vision facilitated the formation of the Barangay Children's Association (BCA) in BASECO. The BCA is a community-level mechanism that gives children the opportunity to be consulted on the issues affecting them (such as child protection, peace and order, climate change and disasters) and to offer solutions for addressing these issues. The BCA meets its members every Saturday and

¹⁴ Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) is a council meant to represent the youth in each barangay in the Philippines.

convenes with BASECO's LGU officials every two months. The children and youth representatives of BASECO also join the BIAN's regular meetings and consultations, where DRRM plans and status updates are part of the topics tackled. The BASECO Youth Group was also formed to help the barangay implement and monitor programs and activities, including DRR and solid waste management.

Bilang nakatira po dito sa BASECO na vulnerable sa disasters, ang partisipasyon ng mga kabataan ay importante na sumama sa mga community activities, pagpapalano ng barangay. May mahalagang tulong din po kami na mabuksan ang kaisipan ng ibang pang youth sa brgy na magkaroon din sila ng awareness atsaka paano ito mapaghahandaan. Kasi po, sa panahon po ngayon, karamihan po sa mga kabataan ngayon hind active sa ganitong usapan. Kaya ang ibang kabataan, sila rin ang sumisira sa kalikasan, pagtapon ng basura sa hindi trash bin. Kung kasama sila na magkaroon ng awareness sa DRR, isa rin sila sa makakatulong po... (Youth leader)

"As a resident of BASECO, a place that is vulnerable to disasters, the participation of children in community activities and barangay planning is important. We also help in opening the minds of other youth in the barangay to be aware and know how to prepare for disasters. Nowadays, most children and youth are not active as regards this topic and so they themselves have practices that destroy the environment like not properly disposing of their garbage. If they will have awareness about DRR, then they can be among those who can help advance it." (Youth leader).

School-level mechanisms were also important in mobilizing children and youth for DRR. A DRR core group composed of different stakeholders, including schools, was created in BASECO to the engagement of students in DRR. Tapping the Batang Emergency Response Team (BERT) in schools was also a milestone for World Vision in engaging children in urban DRR. Conceptualized by the NCR DRRM Council, BERT is a children and youth organization established mainly in Metro Manila that focuses on pupil- and student-centered disaster risk reduction and management. Among the schools in BASECO, World Vision influenced the DRR programs of H.J. Atienza Elementary School and Corazon Aquino High School.

Before World Vision, BERT annual projects were limited to collecting plastic bottles and distributing earthquake hats and life vests. Using this existing school mechanism, World Vision trained students on disaster preparedness and disaster response, as well as informed the school's disaster plans with the perspective of children. Lastly, a youth representative (the Student Supreme Government (SSG) officer) participated in DRRM planning and served as an active partner of the barangay in conducting awareness and advocacy campaigns in schools.

IV. TOWARDS A RESILIENT BASECO

This case study documented how the urbanized yet highly vulnerable community of BASECO developed their DRR capacity and engaged children and youth in the process. Their efforts have been recently recognized by the City Government of Manila and BASECO was awarded with the Barangay Laging Handa¹⁵ award for its comprehensive CF-BDRRM plan in 2018. Building and strengthening the DRR capacity of BASECO was a long yet meaningful journey, one that could help other communities facing the same vulnerabilities.

This case study also highlighted the drivers of good practices and the lessons learned in the process. It discussed how multi-sectoral and LGU partnerships were important in establishing policy infrastructures, particularly for accessing local funding and gaining the government's buy-in and support, both of which are needed to implement and sustain child-focused DRR initiatives in urban contexts like BASECO. World Vision learned that it is important that LGUs initiate the process, rather than imposing its mandate on the LGU.

Furthermore, this case study showed that collaboration between diverse stakeholders is a huge development asset in urban areas. This is evidenced by the work of BIAN members, which allowed for the pooling of resources that made BASECO's DRR activities possible, even without dedicated funding from World Vision's technical programming. Unfortunately, it is important to note that the BuB program was discontinued in 2016 upon the transition of the new administration. This prompted World Vision to eventually implement a Disaster Risk Reduction Technical Program in BASECO. This would help sustain and boost the community's DRR momentum by dedicating sufficient allocation for their DRR interventions.

¹⁵ Excellence Award for Community Disaster Preparedness



At the same time, this case study showed that DRR efforts are more effective with child and youth participation. World Vision's CF-DRR initiative is a community-based approach to disaster risk reduction and management, where children are at the heart of every process. From the experience of BASECO, World Vision and its partners provided avenues for children and young people in the community to define their disaster situation and recommend solutions for the issues affecting them. The overall process promotes children's right to express their views, to have their views given due consideration, and to influence decision-making.

In the CF-DRR workshops, children and youth brought attention to concerns that were often overlooked by adults, such as the need for functional streetlights, which help minimize the risks they face in the community. Youth leaders also recalled feeling empowered by the opportunity to identify how they can be tapped by the LGU to further strengthen their DRR efforts. Furthermore, this case study also identified that maximizing the community's existing mechanisms encouraging adults to engage children in the process and gaining the approval of parents/guardians are all important forms of support for child-focused disaster risk reduction.

The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) declares that children are the group most affected by disasters, especially in developing countries like the Philippines which belong in the top ten countries most at risk for disasters and extreme weather events.¹⁶ With rapid urbanization taking place throughout the world, urban disaster risk reduction is a strategy that most cities have adopted. This includes Manila, which is among the top ten fastest growing cities facing the greatest climate change risks and environmental challenges.¹⁷

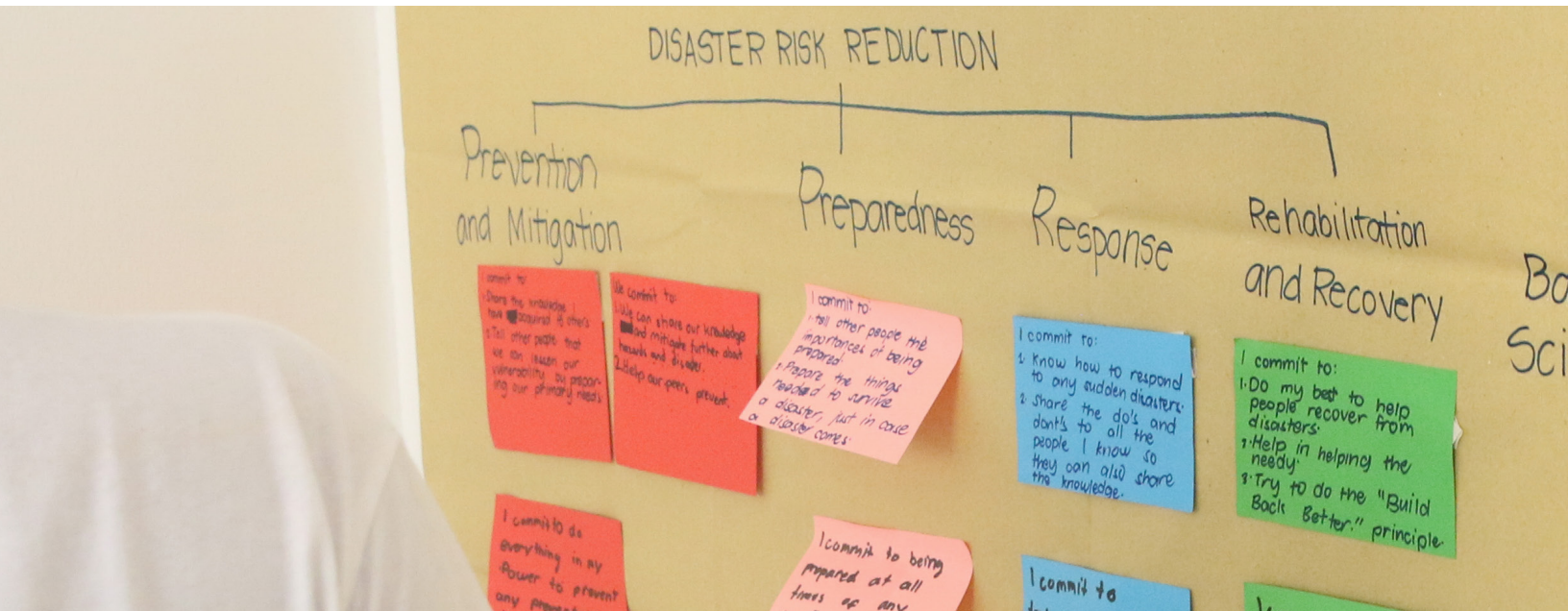
As the reality of climate change and efforts to reduce disaster risk take place, this case study shows that it is important to recognize that children have roles, rights, and capacities, which are often overlooked because of competing interests. Acting upon this would not only enhance children's personal development skills and readiness for disaster, but also improve social cohesion and disaster preparedness within the community.¹⁸

¹⁶ World Risk Index 2020, Climate Risk Index 2020

¹⁷ Environmental Risk Outlook 2021, Climate Change Vulnerability Index 2021

¹⁸ Pfefferbaum, B., Pfefferbaum, R., & Van Horn, R. (2018). Involving Children in Disaster Risk Reduction: The Importance of Participation. *European Journal of Psychotraumatology*. 9 (sup2): 1425577. Published online 2018 Feb 5.

Key Lessons Moving Forward



- Unlock children and youth's potential.** It is important to recognize that, while children and youth are given the space and opportunity to actively participate in decisions affecting their well-being, they often face other hurdles in front of adults, such as feeling uneasy and less confident. Through the empowerment trainings of World Vision, children in BASECO, especially child leaders, eventually gained the confidence to engage in dialogue with adults, including barangay officials. It also empowered them to interact with and share their knowledge on DRR with other children.
- Be mindful of children and youth's workload.** Given the density of urban players in BASECO, the engagement of children in DRR initiatives should be consolidated. This is so as not to affect their school standing by having too many extracurricular activities.
- Consolidate plans to address children's issues in the community.** One good practice is to develop a Community Shared Plan, which covers all issues in the community such as housing, solid waste, environment, peace and order, etc. With the participation of child-focused CSOs like World Vision, children were included in this plan. This Community Shared Plan has become the basis of the barangay for their budgeting every year. Budget was allocated for children's activities and participation, including DRR.
- Strengthen CSOs to advance children's rights and advocate for policies.** Through various orientation and training sessions conducted by World Vision and BIAN, the BASECO community and LGU have increased their knowledge of child well-being issues, disaster risk reduction, and the critical need for policies and interventions that address both. As a result, several policies and ordinances on DRR and child protection were passed and implemented in BASECO. Therefore, the continued strengthening of CSOs is a sustainability mechanism that will advance the rights and welfare of children. It advocates for policies like the inclusion of child-focused DRR interventions in the barangay's programs, amidst competing priorities. Moreover, CSO partnerships give rise to joint action for more effective advocacy and influence.
- Diversify resourcing for urban programming.** World Vision tapped government funding (through BuB) and collaborated with BIAN members to pool the resources necessary for implementing child-focused DRR in BASECO from 2015 to 2018. Likewise, given that most businesses, corporations, and donor agencies are located in the city, World Vision also leveraged on private funding and grants for its subsequent urban programs/projects, including the current DRR and climate change related initiatives in BASECO (i.e. solid waste management and school- and community-based WaSH). In general, organizations can leverage on the density and diversity of development actors in the metropolis/urban areas for urban programming partnerships.



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