**ACT ALLIANCE – PHILIPPINES FORUM**

Typhoon Haiyan Evaluation and Strategic Planning

12-13 December 2016 | Forest Lodge, Baguio City

**Attendance:**

1. Lot Felizco – Christian Aid
2. Femia Baldeo – Lutheran World Relief
3. Minnie Anne Calub – NCCP
4. Anders Salomonsson – Church of Sweden
5. Allan Vera – Christian Aid
6. Alvic Padilla – Christian Aid
7. Edward Santos – NCCP
8. Sylwyn Sheen Alba – ACT Coordination Center (ACC)

**Agenda:**

* Ecumenical Diakonia – Framing Our Planning (Rev. Rex RB Reyes Jr., NCCP)
* Planning
  + Vision And Mission
  + Updates And Reflections On Recent Forum Activities
  + Strategic Perspectives, Priorities
* Business Meeting

**DAY 1: December 12, 2016**

**1. FRAMING THE PLANS AND PERSPECTIVES**

* ***Ecumenical Diakonia***

*Reflection based on the story of Jesus’ feeding of the five thousand shared by Rev. Rex RB Reyes Jr., NCCP General Secretary.*

How do Christians define their Christian humanitarian work?

* + Everything held in common – collective and individual rights, constant act of communion, sharing and solidarity
  + Servers at table – ensuring that everybody participates and gets their share; inclusiveness; servant leadership
  + Resources – always limited but we can do miracles; to whom much is given, much is expected
  + People who follow Jesus have different needs and motivations
  + Learning and celebration from the Haiyan experience
    - Our responsibility to give
    - Acts of mercy and acts of justice
    - The importance of organising
    - Assessment, accompaniment
    - Stories of survivors are important
* ***The ACT Alliance Global Strategy***
  + **Vision** – United in the common task of all Christians to manifest God’s unconditional love for all people, ACT Alliance works towards a world community where all God’s creation lives with dignity, justice, peace and full respect for human rights and the environment
  + **Mission** – As churches and church-related organisations, we work together for positive and sustainable change in the lives of people affected by poverty and injustice through coordinated and effective humanitarian, development and advocacy work
  + **Strategic Aim 1 – Human dignity** - rights-based approach, principled practice, accountability; participation, agency and rights of poor people, gender equality, accountability of duty bearers
  + **Strategic Aim 2 – Community resilience** – development effectiveness, risk reduction, humanitarian preparedness and response, good governance; transformational development work, community preparedness, effective and timely response, influence
  + **Strategic Aim 2 – Environmental sustainability** – lobby and advocacy, awareness raising, building technical capacities; just, equitable and sustainable climate change agreements, advocacy and influence at various levels, building community capacity to deal with impact of climate change
  + **Enabling Aim – A robust alliance** – engaged members, accountable and capable leaders, increased brand recognition, quality of work, functioning secretariat; motivated and committed members, learning for continuous improvement, representing ACT Alliance values in words and deeds

The Forum had a quick external and internal analyses based on the current context. The following are the key issues identified during the workshop.

**2. KEY ISSUES – OUR ANALYSIS NARRATIVES**

2.1. ***Increasing needs and climate change impact****:* The Philippines as middle-income country with persistent poverty and increasing inequality. Poverty is largely rural and manifested in uneven rural and urban development. Landlessness is still widespread. The country is experiencing increased numbers of disaster events with increasing ferocity and impact.

2.2. ***A new government with authoritarian behaviour:*** The new government is still a largely unknown quantity and therefore still largely unpredictable. What is clear however is a seeming culture of impunity and disregard for human rights, especially civil and political rights. There are progressives in government positions but it is too early to tell whether they can influence the direction of government or that they are a defining feature of the current administration. Governance is not policy-based and therefore very unpredictable and pose serious challenges to advocacy.

2.3. ***Constrained and competitive local resources context for civil society and development organisations*:** National and local civil society organisations face a problem of dwindling international aid and a constrained and competitive local resourcing environment. There are opportunities for tapping/mobilising local resources, including tapping public financing. ACT Alliance members have a potential to be competitive in terms of local resource generation and mobilisation.

2.4. ***Rekindling activism and role for faith-based organisations:*** There is a resurgent mood or climate of activism in the Philippines and it is important to spotlight the role and possible impact of faith-based organisation in this, and more particularly, in development and resilience work agenda and ways of working. Faith-based organisations have something to say on the development agenda and not just donors and therefore they have to make their voices heard on different levels – national, regional, global. There is a need for ensuring an enabling environment for effective capacity building action among local civil society actors. Faith-based organisations can contribute to this as well as in mobilising, organising and accompanying local communities and organisations.

2.5. ***Still a largely donor-driven development and humanitarian agenda:*** There is significant global agreement and consensus on transformative, positive global agenda on development and humanitarian work, e.g., sustainable development goals, development effectiveness, World Humanitarian Summit, etc. However, it is still important to be vigilant and address the problem of who determines resourcing priorities and mechanisms. Priorities tend to reflect more global, international and national issues rather than local ones, e.g., the need for local community organising. In view of these, there is a need for civil society organisations to make sure they influence global analysis and articulation of issues by asserting local knowledge and experiences.

2.6. ***A positive experience, thus far, of collaboration among ACT Philippines Forum members:*** Haiyan is considered a positive example of collaboration, with an agreed framework and member-based implementation. ACT Philippines Forum members worked well and had positive impacts at the community level. ACT Philippines Forum members also worked to participate in other humanitarian spaces and with humanitarian actors. The work around the World Humanitarian Summit was a collaborative endeavour as well. Thus far, collaboration is understood as involving a range of options (i.e., the mode of collaboration is determined by context and where it makes sense). There is already good humanitarian collaboration; but there are still potentials for even more collaboration in development and advocacy work.

2.7. ***Structural, regional and visibility concerns****:* The role and function of the regional formation/platform is still unfolding (regionalisation, decentralisation?). It is important for the ACT Philippines Forum to continue to engage and influence this process – especially in terms of more consultative and transparent processes and relationships. In the country, the future of the ACC is a concern since funding beyond Haiyan is not clear. The role of the ACC is considered important in the future effective functioning of the ACT Philippines Forum. With regards to visibility, the ACT Philippines Forum has gained visibility with its WHS partners and among faith-based organisations. We are aspiring to be regarded as a reliable, credible, authoritative source of information, positioned and valued not only within the faith-based constituency but in the broader humanitarian and development community as well. Finally, there are “identity” issues that need to be addressed – what is the ACT Philippines forum, what do we stand for, what is our understanding of and particular take on basic concepts such as “rights-based approach to development.”

After identifying and analysing key issues, the Forum discussed on the significant changes it wants to see from the above analysis.

**3. IMPERATIVES – KEY CHANGES WE WANT TO SEE**

3.1. *It is important for ACT Philippines Forum to substantively address persistent poverty, increasing inequality and the threat of climate change.*

* ACT Philippines Forum as a strong advocate on climate (climate change reflected and addressed in global, regional, national and local levels).
* Voices of the poor and marginalised communities are amplified and their influence increased on climate justice issues. Community organising allows engagement/dialogue with other sectors (e.g., climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction).
* Resilience programming that contributes to building resilient communities.

3.2. *It is important for ACT Philippines Forum to deal with the challenge of a government with authoritarian tendencies/inclinations.*

* Unified people’s actions for change and advocacy on a “people’s agenda” – drawn from consultation with people and not just from the President’s own and a select few.
* Parts of government are influenced to be responsive and accountable through opportunistic and principled engagement.

3.3*. It is important for ACT Philippines Forum to deal with the problem of dwindling local resources for civil society and humanitarian organisations.*

* Power shift towards local – determining agenda, programme thrust, fund allocation.
* Mechanisms and capacity building efforts are in place for local fund mobilisation and allocation, based on an understanding that self-reliance takes a long time.
* Resourcing discussions need to be reframed – especially in terms of the challenges of advocating for aid to middle-income countries and the whole development aid and business models.
* Ways of working and organisational behaviour are reshaped to reflect constrained resources – optimising non-monetary resources, sharing of human resources and expertise, etc.

3.4. *It is important for ACT Philippines Forum to contribute to nurture the emergent activism in the country – rekindling activism.*

* Activism is channelled towards transformative politics and people-based development, away from elite capture and patronage/dynastic politics.
* Non-government and civil society organisations evolve along with changes in development landscapes (including changes in resources, localisation, and political climate).
* Progressive faith-based organisations across faiths work together on specific issues, in specific platforms in order to influence policy and inspire people with our core values of love and justice.

3.5.  *It is important for ACT Philippines Forum to help ensure that the global development and humanitarian agenda – including those of donors – are responsive to the needs and perspectives of the poor and marginalised grassroots communities and population groups.*

* Grassroots perspectives are prominent in development and humanitarian agenda, especially at the global level.
* Shared platform that provide equal voices and coherent, aligned and synergistic advocacy.
* True participation, bottom-up approach.

3.6. *It is important for ACT Philippines Forum to ensure an effective structure and internal mechanisms that promotes collaborative, effective and visible development and humanitarian work.*

* Simple but effective structure – meaningful working together, no overlapping/duplication.
* Expand collaboration to include development and advocacy work, development programming, collaboration in resourcing.
* Timely and accurate information sharing with Regional ACT Office.
* Greater reach and greater impact, clear direction for FBOs in the Philippines with regards to development, humanitarian and advocacy work
* Adequately resourced ACC
* Membership expansion
* Effective communication, based on a clear communication plan

On the second day, the Forum decided on what it would prioritise for the next two years, aligned with the global aims of ACT Alliance.

**4. KEY STRATEGIES AND OBJECTIVES – PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT TWO YEARS**

***Build/Strengthen the FBO platform for humanitarian action:***

* Strengthen capacity of FBOs and their constituencies, up to the local level
* Enhance quality of humanitarian responses through stronger adherence to standards
* Engage in advocacy for people centred and locally led humanitarian action
* Influence policy and practices- NDRRMC, amendatory bill
* Possible springboard for collaboration beyond humanitarian concerns; set up programmatically the FBO national summits as platforms/venues to discuss humanitarian and development agenda (contextualise global trends as well as inform the global agenda on local experience/context)

***Build/Strengthen capacities and mechanisms for local resource generation and to address climate change:***

* Sustained capacity building programme for local resource generation and fund management
* Along with other relevant local actors, develop options for local humanitarian funding mechanisms
* Capacitate Forum members and their local partners to actively engage in local platforms (e.g., local DRRMC)
* A member can take on a lead role in Climate Change advocacy
* Continue individual member’s programs while maximizing opportunities of engagement with regional advocacies and event-specific work – a forum member can take on a lead role (e.g. akin to NCCP re Human Rights)

***Build/Strengthen the Forum:***

* Bring in ACT Alliance members either as full or associate members of the Forum.
* Improve visibility and profile of ACT Forum and its work, both within its main constituency and the broader humanitarian and development community, guided by a clear communications plan.
* Asia-Pacific Forum – active participation and contribution from the Philippines to pro-actively influence content/direction of Asia-Pacific work, as well as links to global level, how Philippines can help.
* Retain ACC function beyond Haiyan project – explore members’ contributions/resource sharing to sustain the momentum of the Forum’s work.

**5. PRIORITISATION & FOUNDATIONAL DISCUSSIONS**

Prioritisation Criteria:

* Alignment with ACT global priorities
* Urgency and relevance to national/local context
* Added-value, distinct contribution of ACT as a Forum
* Ongoing initiatives and relationships
* Practical/practicable (not cost-extensive?)

Deprioritised:

* Human Rights – to be taken up not as a Forum, but by individual members who are better positioned for this (but prepare a reactive position as the Forum)

**6. OPERATIONAL DETAILS**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Key initiatives | Milestones | | Roles and Resources | Remarks |
|  | 2017 | 2018 |  |  |
| FBO PLATFORM | | | | |
| Capacity Building | * Proposal development and resource mobilisation – explore with ACT members individually * Mapping of FBOs up to provincial level; identify targets * Humanitarian Capacity assessment (CHS report, document) | FBO SUMMIT | Lot, Fem, Minnie, Anders  Ylah and Edward  TBC (CHS project team, training team) |  |
| Quality of humanitarian response | * Best practices documentation * Documentation of distinct FBO contribution |  | TBC (CHS project team, training team)  Fem |  |
| Advocacy | * Get updates from DRRNet and NDRRMC re NGO reps * Meeting to follow-through on FBO rep in NDRRMC * WHS one-year on forum |  | Lot and Ylah  Shared contributions |  |
| STRENGTHENING THE FORUM | | | | |
| Meetings | * Regularized meetings (quarterly) * Institutionalized Fellowship activity | Regularized meetings (quarterly) | Convenor | 3 regular and one annual assessment/planning meeting  With additional “As needed” meetings |
| Membership Expansion   * Invitation to Bread for the World, The Salvation Army | Communication, Negotiations for membership |  | Convenor (BFW)  NCCP (TSA) | for coordination/ integration of work on resilience and climate work  - Strength comes from mix of north-south members and numbers |
| Visibility & profile   * Communication Planning | Communication Plan developed |  | CA | CA to produce working draft for the April regular meeting  Use ACT guidelines |
| Asia Pacific Forum  -review of Regional Consultation discussions and develop engagement  -Ensure participation in all AP forum | Update to members on Regional Consultation |  | NCCP | Issue of resources for short meetings, Representation of Anders (with prep skpye) or Skype engagement |
| Global Engagement  Assessment of contribution of forum to Global strategy and Recommendations |  | Consultation WS for Forum members  Phils Host Global Assembly? (Oct)  Forum member elected | Convenor  NCCP? | End of 2018, Consultations expected early 2018  2018 General Assembly Year |
| ACC | Secretariat function “institutionalized” |  | NCCP (host Secretariat ) | Secretariat work need not come from convenor’s institution  Other Forum members to provide support for big activities/ operations |
| LOCAL RESOURCES | | | | |
| Develop options for local humanitarian funding mechanisms | TSC LHF initiative with NCCP ++ (Jan)  NCCP Fundraising Campaign planned (1Q); Launched during key humanitarian date |  | CA  NCCP - Coordinated with media? | Transforming Surge Capacity national consortium (NCCP, NASSA, CODE NGO, HRC) LHF initiative of CA  NCCP plan on local fundraising for developmental and humanitarian work |
| Sustained Capacity Building for fundraising and local fund management | Fundraising capacity Building (Mar-May)  Learnings shared to other members  Re-echo |  | COS, NCCP | COS has existing initiative already |
| CLIMATE CHANGE | | | | |
| Lead Organization   * share Global/ regional initiatives * initiate conversations * potential common actions /Common campaign event?   Recognize individual work of Forum members |  |  | CA |  |

**7. FINAL TASKS**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Business Matters | Remarks |
| An inspiring vision for the next two years  (Or, an inspiring title for the "strategic plan") | Contest – Forum members are encouraged to share their ideas and have a chance to win an exciting prize! ☺ |
| Documentation and communication of "strategic plan"   * Full documentation * Popular version * Distribution | Early February 2017  March 2017 |
| ACT Philippines Forum Follow-up meeting | March 17, 9:30 AM |
| ACT Philippines Forum Annual Meeting | May 8, 2017 |
| Forum Annual Report | Submitted |
| ACT Coordination Center Final Report | Submitted |
| ACT Learning Document | For comments, final draft by February 2017 |
| EPRP Update | Once the new ACT Appeal Mechanism is rolled out, follow up Regional Office on the publishing |
| ACT Asia/Pacific Regional Forum Meeting | To inquire on the output of the meeting last December |