

*Originator: ACT Philippines Forum*

## **ACT Alliance public statement on climate change in the Philippines**

ACT Alliance supports and echoes the resounding global call for climate justice. Recognising that the Philippines is one of the most vulnerable countries to the impacts of climate change, we express the urgent need to take action in building community resilience to disasters and climate change. We affirm that this action must be combined with holding historically and currently carbon emitting countries accountable for loss and damages in climate-vulnerable, developing countries.

In 2018, the Global Climate Risk Index listed the Philippines as the 5<sup>th</sup> most affected country by climate change. This has been evident with tropical cyclones becoming more frequent and intense, as with Typhoon Haiyan (2013) affecting 16,106,807 people, Typhoon Bopha (2012) with 6,246,664 affected individuals, and Typhoon Ketsana (2009) with 4,901,763. Prolonged and extreme droughts have also caused food and water scarcity in agricultural communities in the Cagayan Valley (Region II), Central Luzon (Region III), Bicol (Region V), and North Cotabato (SOCCSKSARGEN). Most recently, Typhoon Mangkhut ravaged Northern Luzon with thousands of poor farmers suffering huge agricultural losses due to changing weather patterns and lack of capacity to adapt. These are in addition to the impacts of climate change on the composition and productivity of forests and seas and on the spread of vector-borne diseases, such as malaria and dengue to which Filipino children are the most vulnerable. These events have a major impact on people living in poverty and vulnerable situations.

The members of the ACT Philippines Forum are united by the principles of Christian faith that upholds human dignity and the gifts of creation. Our ministry is guided by the rights-based approach that ensures the dignity of the poor, oppressed, and marginalised are upheld and respected. We are also led by our commitment to the Sendai Framework for Action, the World Humanitarian Summit, the Paris Agreement, and the Sustainable Development Goals.

We are resolute in identifying the present global economic system that encourages overproduction at the expense of a sustainable environment and profit over rights to full life as the root of this climate crisis. Thus, as long as this greed-driven system prevails, the whole Creation will continue to suffer. Inspired by our Christian faith, the ACT Alliance Philippines Forum commits to:

- Promote people-centred initiatives that strengthen local capacities
- Facilitate community access to climate risk information
- Build community capacity to access climate funds, co-lead adaptation planning and formulate disaster preparedness plans
- Support local climate advocacy
- Advocate for a shift from fossil fuels
- Support people-centred, scientific, sustainable solutions that enhance community resilience

In the spirit of stewardship, the ACT Alliance calls for:

- accountability from the countries that have caused harm to the planet through their carbon emissions and environmental plunder. We are firm in our stand that they should take the lead in reducing carbon emissions and that they should also address the loss and damages associated with the adverse impacts of climate change. In this regard, we call for the full and strict implementation of the Paris Agreement, led by the principles of equity, gender justice and human rights.
- On the Philippines government to reverse policies that entrench the poorest and most marginalized to further vulnerability, and strengthen its political will to address the roots of Filipino vulnerability to disasters and increase capacities to adapt to climate change impacts.
- On the Philippines government to stop the killing and harassment of environmental defenders and frontline communities facing the harmful impacts of environmental destruction and climate-induced hazards.

In this united journey for climate justice and resilience, we are hopeful that each human being created by God will be able to enjoy life in its fullness. **ACT NOW FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE!**