PHILIPPINES

Forecast Based Financing Phase I

Lessons Learned

(2015 - 2017)

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**Glossary**

**FbF:** Forecast-Based Financing

**FoRECAST**: Food Resiliency in Emergencies & Climate Change Adaptation Systems Tracking

**DPR/CCA:** Disaster Preparedness and Response/Climate Change Adaptation

**LGU**: Local Government Units

**LCE:** Local Chief Executive

**DILG:** Department of the Interior and Local Government

**OCD:** Office of Civil Defence

**DAP:** Development Academy of the Philippines

**PAGASA:** Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration

**LDRRM**: Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management

**SOP:** Standard Operating Procedures

**EWS:** Early Warning System

**CO:** Country Office (WFP)

**SLP**: Seasonal Livelihoods Planning

**IRI:** International Research Institute for Climate and Society

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Outcome 1: WFP and Government share a common understanding of natural hazard and climate risk

Outcome 2: National early warning system that monitors natural hazard indicators and warns when indicators are matched

Outcome 3: Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for emergency preparedness are linked to early warning indicators to enable effective early action

Outcome 4: Government capacity is strengthened to implement SOPs

1. **Lessons learned from Phase I**

* Baseline assessments
* Technical Working Group (TWG)
* Standard Operating Procedures
* Simulation exercises

1. **Challenges and recommendations for way forward**

* SOPs and institutionalisation
* Technical Working Group (TWG) and national advocacy
* Collaboration with GRC
* Linking with others/partnerships
* Financing for preparedness
* Internal linkages
* PAGASA capacity strengthening
* Guidance and strategic vision on FbF

1. **Executive summary · *key findings***

In the Philippines CO the project is called Food Resiliency in Emergencies & Climate Change Adaptation Systems Tracking (FoRECAST). Managed by the Programme unit, its implementation was greatly facilitated by the parallel implementation of the Disaster Preparedness and Response/Climate Change Adaptation (DPR/CCA Programme): a 5 years project started in 2011 aiming at strengthening provinces’ disasters management capacities and early warning systems. Besides in the Philippines the financing component of the FbF concept is understood in relation to mobilization of resources rather than anticipatory cash transfer.

During the first phase of the FbF project discussions have been of national scope, with actions piloted in ten provinces. The overall objectives of the project phase I were to: develop streamlined and standard forecast-based protocols and systems; track compliance from the local up to the national level to contribute to achieving readiness of the Philippine national government; and select vulnerable communities in the face of disasters and food and nutrition shocks.

The FoodSecure modality has also been introduced in the country and could offer collaborations with FbF, though its continuity seemed uncertain in August 2017, with no staff currently dedicated to the project.

**Key lessons from phase I**

Main lessons from phase I can be summarised as follows:

**Baseline assessments:** the initial set of baseline assessments conducted by Alcanz Consulting Group provided useful information on risks profiles and early warning devices in place in the 10 provinces. It however lacked localised data and contained little information on existing protocols and policies. The DAP worked on a second baseline assessment that looks mostly at disaster risks profiles at LGUs level, without considering the provincial or national levels - all making it challenging to have an overview of current forecast-based preparedness measures.

**Technical Working Group (TWG):** The Technical Working group convened regularly over the course of phase I. They validated findings from the baseline report and provided feedback on the provincial SOPs. A lack of prioritisation of FbF amongst the group members was nonetheless reported, together with low buy-in of the SOPs at national level. Collaboration with PAGASA was reported smooth over the duration of the project.

**Standard Operating Procedures:** SOPs were developed for the 10 project provinces, targeting the provincial council members as the primary audience. Some municipalities requested LGUs and LCEs to be involved in their development for more localised protocols. While the SOPs were reported useful as they systematise all existing protocols, their actual added value was questioned.

**Simulation exercise:** the exercise helped clarify roles and responsibilities and gave the opportunity to PAGASA to better understand information needs of their end users. The need to strengthen LGUs’ forecast interpretation capacity was highlighted. Requests were also expressed to include LCEs in the exercise as being the main decision makers.

**Transition to phase II**

Identified challenges and recommendations for Phase II implementation are:

**Institutionalisation of SOPs**: the added value of the provincial SOPs developed during phase I was questioned by provincial authorities, while the process for their integration into existing disaster management plans remains unclear. Developing clear advocacy messages based on identified added value of SOPs should help for their buy-in at national level.

**Technical Working Group and national advocacy:** in relation to the above, the CO reported a lack of prioritisation of FbF among the Technical Working Group members, as well as low buy-in of FbF at national level. Given their institutionalised role in the NDRRMC, the German Red Cross will be a key partner for WFP to promote the FbF concept towards government policymakers at the national level and help revamp and formalise membership of the Technical Working Group.

**Collaboration with GRC**: The German Red Cross will start implementing FbF in the coming months, with their main objectives offering strong opportunities for collaboration with WFP. The GRC’s objectives are: 1) integrating FbF into national DRM processes, and 2) development and testing of SOPs and thresholds. WFP should make sure its phase II objectives are complementary with the GRC’s, and establish regular coordination and ways of working with the GRC.

**Linking with other initiatives**: there was little visibility and linkages with similar initiatives from other agencies and NGOs. WFP should map existing similar projects to ensure synergies and possible resources mobilisation for FbF.

**Financing for preparedness**: there is alack of visibility of LCEs’ access to funds for preparedness, and a lack of visibility of preparedness costs in general. In order to identify further financing windows for preparedness, WFP should further explore LCEs' access mechanisms and evaluate general preparedness costs.

**Internal linkages:** FbF presents an opportunity for WFP to integrate the 72-Hour Assessment tool and the Seasonal Livlhood Planning, including through the SOPs developed during phase I. Ways to connect those initiatives should be further defined, including potential opportunity of using FbF established relationships for SLP introduction at the national level. Continuity of the FoodSecure initiative and linkages with FbF should also be clarified.

**PAGASA**: PAGASA has limited capacity in sub-seasonal forecasting capabilities, as well as restricted feedback on accuracy of their local forecast from municipalities and LGUs. In addition to activities planned during phase II to strengthen PAGASA’s outreach and capacity building at the local level, WFP could facilitate data sharing with IRI to help filling the gap in PAGASA's sub-seasonal forecasting capabilities. Besides, impact-based forecast models exist that could help strengthen local interpretation of PAGASA's forecast.

**Strategic vision of FbF and need for clearer guidance:** the review highlighted a lack of guidance and clarity from HQ on the FbF concept and what its implementation actually entails in country. HQ should further define FbF priorities and implementation strategy.

1. **Introduction**
2. **Forecast-based preparedness context in the Philippines**

In the Philippines, the disaster management decision process is decentralised with preparedness and response actions being taken at the municipal/LGUs level. In terms of resources allocated for preparedness actions in the country, 70% of the 5% budget allocated to Local Governemnt Units (LGUs) for disaster management is earmarked for preparedness, which includes both general preparedness and early actions prior to disasters - the remaining 30% being for response. However there is no detailed visibility on funds allocated for preparedness, nor systematised way to report on anticipatory actions taken (it was reported that some LGUs in coastal areas have used DRM funds for anticipatory cash transfer, however given the decentralised system there is no overview or feedback of such actions).

As outlined by WFP baseline study, while some of the existing early warning systems show potentials, their technical complexities limit sustained operability and replicability in some LGUs. Also, technical gaps in terms of frequency and timing of data collection, information sharing, and statistical reliability of data at different levels, make their use problematic. Furthermore, it remains unclear how some of the systems are linked with decision making at the national and sub-national levels.

Besides, the various efforts in advancing the capacity of the Philippines in forecasting weather and climate conditions have resulted in widespread and unregulated installation of related instruments warranting the need for clear and specific policies and regulations on: installation of these sensors and monitoring data generated.

In regards to policies and existing protocols, the enactment of the Climate Change Act (Republic Act 9729) and the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act (Republic Act 10121) have resulted in substantial developments on how the Philippines addresses climate change, both at the national and local levels.

Checklist for Minimum Actions have recently been developed by DILG aiming to guide LCEs for cyclone preparedness (the LISTO guidelines). There is no equivalent to date for other hazards.

The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) is organised as below with responsibilities for disaster management split between four departments: DOST, DILG, DSWD, NEDA. The FbF project mostly fell under DILG’s mandate.



1. **The FbF project in the Philippines**

For the first phase of the FbF project, the Philippines CO had planned to:

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| 1. **Develop Platforms for Sharing, Streamlining and Tracking** – creation of a multi-stakeholder platform that will be composed of concerned UN agencies, national government agencies, regional and provincial governments and other stakeholders. WFP, through this platform, will facilitate dialogues among stakeholders to ensure:    1. regular knowledge sharing of policies and models for climate change adaptation, disaster resilience, and food and nutrition security    2. stream of initiatives ensuring alignment/link between local and national systems    3. track forecast-based protocols and systems and quality assessment. 2. **Research and Assessment** – coordination with the Climate Change Commission (CCC), Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA), National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) and Department of Agriculture (DA), and conduct of reseach studies to identify and assess the following –    1. climate-change aggravating risks, and its impacts on food and nutrition security    2. national CCA, DRR and food and nutrition security-related policies, and local integration and compliance    3. required and existing early warning devices and forecast-based protocols and systems at the national and local levels.   This component will involve presentation and validation of results with stakeholders.   1. **Development of Protocols and Systems** – facilitate the development of forecast-based protocols and systems using the results of the assessment (Component 2). This will involve enhancement of early warning systems and scenario-based monitoring of parameters for specific hazards. 2. **Adoption, Pilot-testing and Tracking** – adoption of protocols and systems developed and pilot-testing in ten provinces. This will ensure streamlining of initiatives and ensuring alignment/link between local and national systems, track forecast-based protocols and systems, and quality assessment. |

1. **Learning objectives**

This review identifies the progress made against planned objectives (logical framework), as well as key achievements, lessons and challenges encountered during phase I. It also defines recommendations to inform the next phase in the Philippines in particular and more widely for a future replication to other countries implementing FbF.

**Main objectives of the evaluation were:**

* Assess the relevance and fulfilment of project objectives, effectiveness and efficiency of project implementation;
* Assess first impacts and changes brought about by the project and the sustainability of the project beyond project duration.
* Recommend how FbF can be better integrated into disaster preparedness and response actions at national, subnational and community levels (government and humanitarian partners such as others government stakeholders.
* Recommend how FbF can be best integrated into Nepal’s Country Strategic Plan.
* Define specific learnings (pilot, sector specific, organizational learning, etc.) to be transferred to similar future projects in other WFP assisted countries.

1. **Methodology: data gathering and analysis**

The consultant evaluated the project taking the Logframe’s objectives and indicators as the main criteria. This report was produced based on interviews with government and CO stakeholders in Manila and in one project site as well as a desk review of all available project documentation.

**Data collection methods**

In line with the TOR’s objectives, the methodology for data collection was essentially qualitative and included:

**• *Review and analysis of* s*econdary data****,* including a review of WFP’s own documentation and examination of documents provided to the consultant for review at the commencement of the assignment.

• ***Interviews***:

* DILG office, Ortigas Center
* PAGASA
* DAP Office
* WFP VAM team

• ***Site visits***: visit to project implementation in Laguna with Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council.

The consultant also maintained continuous communication with the Project Coordinator in HQ during the mission.

**Limitations**

* The consultant had only 5 days mission in country (compared to 10 for the two other reviews) and 7 days to finalise the report.
* Documentation: it proved a little confusing to obtain and distinguish relevant documents amongst the numerous reports produced, e.g. the latest DAP baseline assessment report.

1. **Achievements and lessons from Phase I**
2. **Progress made and achievements against planned logframe and indicators**

The Philippines CO made progress on all of the 4 objectives:

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| **Outcome 1: WFP and Government share a common understanding of natural hazard and climate risk**  Achieved:   * Coordination with national and regional line agencies and provincial government units to orient them on the objectives of this project, and to gather risk profiles. * Risk profiles identified, part of the study mentioned under outcome 2. |

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| **Outcome 2: National early warning system that monitors natural hazard indicators and warns when indicators are matched**  Achieved:   * Baseline assessment undertaken by Alcanz Consulting Group from October 2015 to May 2016 to understand: (1) climate risks and impacts in the pilot provinces; (2) current warning systems and preparedness protocols at national, regional and provincial levels; and (3) policy environment, and how policies are aligned and complied with at all levels. * The DAP worked on a second baseline assessment that looked mostly at disaster risks profiles at LGUs level. * Organisation of the Technical Working Group for technical consultations and facilitate alignment of national and local protocols. * Formation of multi-stakeholder platform for information sharing on climate change adaptation, DRR and food and nutrition security, including the TWG. |

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| **Outcome 3 Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for emergency preparedness are linked to early warning indicators to enable effective early action**  Achieved:   * SOPs developed for 10 project provinces, driven by early warning indicators and covering hazards as per risk profile. |

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| **Outcome 4: Government capacity is strengthened to implement SOPs**  Achieved:   * Simulation exercise conducted in August 2017 to test SOPs developed in 2 provinces of Laguna and Batangas. The different national agencies practiced their roles and responsibilities, tested their plans, used the protocols in place pre and post disaster, and examined how these link to national protocols. |

1. **Key lessons from Phase I**

Considering the progress made and achievements described above, the main results findings and lessons from phase I have been identified as follows:

**Baseline assessments**

An initial set of baseline assessments was conducted by Alcanz Consulting Group for the 10 provinces to "identify risks and impacts, the current early warning systems in place and the policy environment". While these studies provide interesting information, the FbF Technical Working Group set up by WFP reported that these studies were rather qualitative and lacked detailed and localised data.

Also, in comparison to the set objectives, the studies actually contain little information on existing protocols and policies. They also don’t provide an overall picture of the early warning system as a whole and the linkages between the different levels (national, provincial and municipal).

The DAP worked on a second baseline assessment (which consolidated report was not yet available at time of writing) that looks mostly at disaster risks profiles at LGUs level without necessarily considering the provincial or national levels - all making it challenging to have an overview of current forecast-based preparedness measures. The CO might want to complement these baseline studies with additional mapping of early warning systems at all levels, which would help redefine the added-value of SOPs.

**Technical Working Group (TWG)**

The group established under the project held several meetings and workshops over the course of the phase I, during which they discussed and validated findings from the Alcanz baseline reports and provided feedback on the SOPs.

Some challenges were reported around: the lack of prioritisation of FbF activities among the TWG members, the general low buy-in of SOPs at national level and the internal restructuring of some member agencies affects their involvement in FbF (in particular the Office of Civil Defence (OCD).

Also, in times of major disaster/crisis, e.g. Marawi crisis, typhoon response, some TWG members engaged in emergency response have prioritized their roles in their respective agency. Recommendations are made in the last section of this report as to how to foster engagement of the Technical Working Group with FbF.

Collaboration with PAGASA, on the other hand, was reported smooth over the duration of the project.

**Standard Operating Procedures**

The SOPs were developed collaboratively with the involvement of some LGUs and under the facilitation of DAP, using data both from PAGASA and locally available data. The models developed by DAP, however, have not been shared with PAGASA nor with the NDRRMC, while they could help improve PAGASA’s access to more localised data.

The SOPs were developed for the 10 project provinces (although only SOPs for Laguna and Batangas were shared with the consultant). Their primary audience are the provincial council members, and some municipalities requested to better integrate LGUs level and involve LCE in their development, as well as include more localised danger thresholds.

Overall, the SOPs were reported to be useful since they systematise all existing protocols from preparedness to recovery. Their formulation process also helped clarify roles and responsibilities. However, their actual added value in regards to existing protocols was questioned, since they don't entail any new actions beyond compiling already existing protocols. Their institutional status was therefore still to be clarified. The last section formulates recommendations in this regard.

**Simulation exercises**

The simulation exercise allowed the testing of SOPs for the two provinces of Laguna and Batangas. The exercise was facilitated by DAP with the participation of all main stakeholders, excluding the Office of Civil Defence.

WFP received positivefeedback on the exercise, particularly on the opportunity given to clarify roles and responsibilities and communications channels amongst all actors involved. PAGASA was also appreciative of the opportunity given to meet with their end users and better understand their information needs. The event also gave them the chance to present their forecast products.

The need for LGUs capacity strengthening to interpret forecast data was also highlighted during the simulation. Further feedback indicated that LCEs should participate to the exercise, being the main decision makers.

1. **Challenges and recommendations for way forward**

**SOPs and institutionalisation**

Identified challenges**:** Beyond compiling existing protocols,the added value of SOPs developed under phase I was unclear in regards to existing protocols; while the process for their institutionalization into existing government plans was still to be defined. It is recommend to:

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| **Recommendations**   * Further define and demonstrate the added value of SOPs phase I and how to integrate provincial SOPs into LDRRM plans (revision process started in September). * To that end, the CO might want to complement the two baseline studies conducted in phase with additional mapping of early warning systems at all levels, which would help redefine the added-value of SOPs. * Consider involving LGUs and LCEs more systematically in future SOPs revision or development processes, and into simulation exercises. * Take up SOPs institutionalisation at the national level through advocacy conducted by the Technical Working Group and collaboration with the RC. |

**Technical Working Group (TWG) and national advocacy**

Identified challenges**:** a lack of prioritisation of FbF among the Technical Working Group members was reported, as well as low buy-in of FbF at national level.

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| **Recommendations**   * Develop advocacy plan with messages, targets and clear roles and responsibilities to address the question of FbF prioritisation in the TWG * The advocacy plan should include taking up the question of institutionalisation of provincial SOPs at national level. * Clarify and agree GRC’s expected role in the TWG and how they could help revamp and formalise membership of the Technical Working Group. * Clarify and agree on GRC’s role in advocating towards government given their institutionalised role in the NDRRMC. |

**Collaboration with the GRC**

Identified challenges**:** the German Red Cross will start implementing FbF in the coming months, with their main objectives presenting strong similarities with WFP’s.

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| **Recommendations**   * Conduct a workshop/planning session with the GRC to clarify GRC’s objectives and complementarity with WFP’s objectives, in particular: 1) integrating FbF into national DRM processes, and 2) development and testing of SOPs and thresholds. * Establish ways of working with the GRC, including regular meetings, roles and responsibilities and joint/shared objectives. |

**Linking with others/partnerships**

Identified challenges**:** little coordination and linkages with similar initiatives from other agencies and NGOs seem to have occurred so far, which should be strengthened to get more visibility on possible resources mobilisation for FbF.

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| **Recommendations**   * Conduct a mapping of existing similar initiatives and who does what in terms of anticipatory response, and identify opportunities for synergies and use of resources. * Consider including key other agencies and NGOs in the Technical Working Group |

**Financing for preparedness**

Identified challenges**:** there is alack of visibility of LCE’s access to funds for preparedness, and a lack of visibility on preparedness costs in the country in general, while this would help in identifying and planning financing windows for preparedness.

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| **Recommendations**   * Undertake a mapping and evaluation of preparedness costs to allow the identification of further financing windows for preparedness. This could be done together with the TWG. * Further explore LCEs' access mechanisms to funds for preparedness * Clarify how to link phase I SOPs to identified financing windows for preparedness |

**Internal linkages**

Identified challenges**:** need to better link FbF to the Seasonal Livelihoods Planning initiative and the 72h tool, and make sure there are synergies and continuity with FoodSecure.

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| **Recommendations**   * Clarify linkages between the FoodSecure initiative and FbF, building on discussions held over the past two years between HQ and CO. * Consider integrating the SLP and 72h into provincial SOPs developed with FbF. * Define best way of using FbF established relationships for SLP introduction at the national level, including through the Technical Working Group. |

**PAGASA capacity strengthening**

Identified challenges**:** PAGASA has limited capacity in sub-seasonal forecasting capabilities, as well as restricted feedback on accuracy of their local forecast from municipalities and LGUs. In addition to activities planned during phase II to strengthen PAGASA’s capacity (i.e. weather station installation and maintenance, climate-information products and community-level weather forecast interpretation skills), the CO should:

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| **Recommendations**   * Explore ways of facilitating data sharing through the International Research Institute for Climate and Society to help filling gaps in PAGASA's sub-seasonal forecasting capabilities. * Look into possibility of using existing impact-based forecast models (e.g. ICHARM) to help strengthen local interpretation of PAGASA's forecast. * Ensure that the models developed by DAP on risks profiles for the SOPs formulation are shared with PAGASA and the NDRRMC to help strengthen PAGASA’s access to localised information and risks profiles. |

**Guidance and strategic vision on FbF**

Identified challenges**:** the Philippines CO reported alack of guidance and clarity from HQ on the FbF concept and what its implementation actually entails in country.

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| **Recommendations**   * HQ to better define vision of FbF, including by:   + Define clear objectives: either strengthening EWS, or pilot anticipatory CBT   + Ensure knowledge management and information exchange among project countries   + Build on Nepal example where FbF seems closest to the concept |
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