

Partners for Resilience in the Philippines

For ten years, CARE supported community resilience in the MANATUTI river basin by diversifying livelihoods, strengthening capacities to withstand effects of climate change and creating spaces for civil society participation in decision-making.

2011-2015

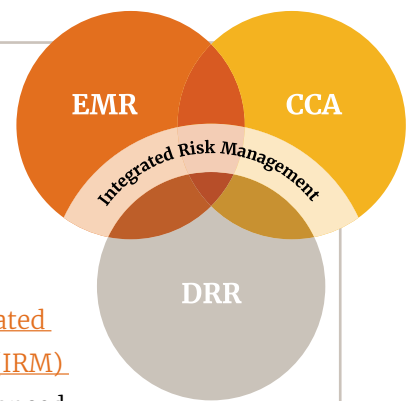
CARE and partner Assistance and Cooperation for Resilience and Development (ACCORD) changed Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) planning by strengthening the DRR capacities of 19 communities and creating space to engage with government. Activities focused on risk assessments, contingency planning, and small-scale mitigation measures.

2016-2020

CARE and ACCORD equipped Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and communities with skills to advocate for IRM at different government levels, using evidence from local interventions and focusing on Quezon City, Caloocan, Malabon, Navotas and Valenzuela, with a special aim to improve the position of women.

Integrated Risk Management

Partners for Resilience's [Integrated Risk Management \(IRM\) approach](#) is an enhanced, holistic approach to increase community resilience by integrating disaster risk reduction (DRR), climate change adaptation (CCA) and ecosystem management and restoration (EMR).



CARE's Partners for Resilience (PfR) programme in the Philippines



1,150,747 community members covered by DRR, CCA, and EMR plans



249 CSOs with strengthened capacities to lobby and advocate for IRM



40 small-scale mitigation actions implemented to rebuild better livelihoods and become more resilient



3,033 staff from government entities and institutions trained in IRM



4,892 people trained in their capacity to prepare for disasters



50 policies, guidelines and laws influenced to take an IRM approach

Context

The Philippines is the world's third most disaster-prone country, threatened by rising sea levels, with frequent floods, droughts, earthquakes and typhoons. Rapid urbanisation has made waste management a major environmental challenge, increasing the [risk of floods](#). In the highly urbanised Malabon-Navotas-Tullahan-Tinajeros (MANATUTI) River Basin in Metro Manila, the population of 2.3 million lives mostly under the poverty line. The disaster management system lacks coordination with local development plans, and particularly the urban poor, most impacted by disasters, are often excluded. In this context, a consortium of CARE, Cordaid, The Netherlands Red Cross, Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre and Wetlands International implemented the [Partners for Resilience \(PfR\)](#) programme for ten years, funded by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs. To increase community resilience, PfR took an Integrated Risk Management (IRM) approach, embedding climate and ecosystems structurally into DRR. This publication outlines CARE's main achievements.



Main achievements

Disaster Risk Reduction and Ecosystem Management

Designing mitigation measures and emergency responses relies on communities' capabilities to identify types and levels of risk. CARE and ACCORD facilitated training to 4,892 community members on Integrated Risk Management, linking disasters, climate and ecosystems, to define plans and [early warning systems](#) based on IRM principles.

- Using CARE and ACCORD's [DRR Training Manual](#), communities conducted risk assessments to develop Risk Maps, Contingency Plans, DRR plans, and mitigation measures. Local planning positioned women's groups as significant stakeholders. This participative approach supported the implementation of 40 small-scale mitigation measures using climate and ecosystem information that protected 1,150,747 community members in MANATUTI. For instance, communities reduced landslide risks and erosion along slopes by planting trees.
- Contingency plans involved actions to solve issues related to trash-clogged waterways and canals. Through a Solid Waste Management System implemented in *barangays* (neighbourhoods), CARE facilitated training and public awareness on impacts of solid waste, establishment of [Ecological Solid Waste Management Committees](#), and construction of two Materials Recovery Facilities.

CARE's gender focus

CARE's [gender equality framework](#) was the basis for the work with CSO partners on community planning, local and national laws and policies. CARE and ACCORD strengthened women's lobby and advocacy capacities on IRM and created opportunities for women to advocate at national platforms, for example the Senate hearing for the Department of Disaster Resilience. Gender-focused activities included the design of IRM solutions adapted to women's needs. CARE's participation in the Metro Manila COVID-19 [Rapid Gender Analysis \(RGA\)](#) helped analyse gender roles, enabling an informed assistance.



Climate Change Adaptation

Climate change poses new threats to water availability, income and food security. Measures to adapt undertaken by communities centred on diversifying income activities, growing flood-resistant crops, modelling climate trends and rehabilitating water systems.

- CARE and ACCORD contributed to household food security and nutrition by [introducing alternative crop varieties](#) such as sugarcane, corn and peanuts, or producing muscovado. Diversified farming improved livelihoods and abated crop loss and soil erosion.
- Climate information is important for both farmers and fishers. ACCORD shared information on local climate change scenarios, which enabled communities to make decisions based on climate trends and to determine whether to proceed in the planned fishing time and planting schedule.
- In the MANATUTI river basin, CARE introduced [a landscape approach](#) that brought together neighbouring municipalities to establish the Water Quality Management Area (WQMA). In this platform, cities, government agencies, academics and private sector representatives identified collective actions to protect the basin and improve water quality based on an [analysis of existing and projected climate, disaster and environmental risks](#).

Strengthening capacity of civil society and government

CARE and ACCORD worked with local organisations and Local Government Units at the barangay and city level in the Manila Bay area. Through trainings and workshops, 249 CSOs strengthened their capacities on lobby and advocacy for IRM, and 471 (3,033 staff) government entities and other relevant stakeholders strengthened their IRM capacities.

- CARE and ACCORD conducted IRM mainstreaming sessions with Local Government Units to inform development planners and decision-makers on how to integrate DRR, climate, and ecosystems in the local development planning and budgeting processes. In urban barangays in 16 cities of Manila Bay, Local Government representatives, CSOs and community members increased their knowledge on IRM and had a deeper appreciation for mainstreaming IRM for an inclusive and harmonised development.
- CARE and ACCORD developed IRM tools which were widely used, and shared best practices to improve the IRM approach. For example, advocacy and lessons from implementation were documented in a [manual for barangay and city development planning](#).

Resilient Fishers

Alvin Martin's story of resilience

Alvin Martin, a father of five, lives and fishes in Navotas, the Philippines. Alvin's fishing community has been deeply affected by climate change, water pollution and solid waste, as well as stark competition by large commercial fishing companies. For Alvin, the climatic and economic uncertainty led him to start advocating for his community: he leads an organisation of small-scale fishers in their conversations with the government about opportunities and adaptation to extreme weather events.

CARE supported Alvin and his community to better understand the impacts of climate change and pollution and strengthen their capacity to adapt to changes in their environment. "During typhoons, our income used to stop, and through the trainings we received, we are now more prepared for these disasters", Alvin adds. For Alvin and his community, resilience means involving multiple stakeholders to develop integrated solutions to restore the environment.

Influencing laws and policies

As a result of the lobby and advocacy of CSOs and communities towards national government agencies, Local Government Units and multi-stakeholder alliances and platforms, 50 policies, development plans and landscape-wide, multi-stakeholder plans were developed in an inclusive, integrated manner.

- Partner Local Governments Units significantly increased their budgets for DRR, adaptation, and ecosystem restoration activities, influenced by CARE and ACCORD. This included rolling out trainings on DRR, CCA, and EMR as well as cash and in-kind contributions for various small-scale activities including early warning systems, rehabilitation of water systems and tree planting.
- The Philippines National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (NDRRM) Plan of 2020-2030, adopted by the Office of Civil Defence, integrated key IRM elements. CARE, ACCORD, and DRR Network Philippines participated in its review and pushed for the integration of IRM. The plan is the national roadmap on reduction and management of disasters that guides coherent mainstreaming of DRR, CCA, and EMR in the local Disaster Risk Management plans.
- The Environmental Management Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in the National Capital Region (EMB-NCR) adopted the IRM approach to improve internal planning and structures, and ensure coherence in subnational/landscape and local plans such as the Water Quality Management Area action plans of MANATUTI and San Juan river systems.
- CARE and PfR partners worked to collect [stakeholder feedback on the Manila Bay Sustainable Development Master Plan \(MBSDMP\)](#), finding a lack of inclusivity, consultation, transparency and harmonised planning.

Sustaining the PfR programme

IRM is now integrated into ACCORD's programming, principles and guidelines. Other PfR stakeholders such as the MANATUTI Water Quality Management Area continue to mobilise resources to implement risk-informed, integrated activities. Partner Local Government Units have mainstreamed IRM into development plans and activities, and some are planning to establish an IRM committee to review project proposals. PfR knowledge remains accessible in the [Resilience and Innovation Learning Hub](#).

Lessons & recommendations

- The IRM approach allowed to unpack technical jargon normally used within the DRR, CCA and EMR frameworks, for local communities. CARE and ACCORD connected local action to global policies and guidelines, bridging across sectors, framing resilience in concrete terms used in local interventions and national policies.
- The small-scale mitigation measures and close links to the communities were crucial for effective advocacy and scaling, as these provided the necessary evidence and legitimacy.
- Strengthening communities' technical capacities proved a successful channel to raise awareness on the need for inclusive local planning. Training communities in DRR was a starting point to identify bottom-up approaches for dialogues between citizens, local government and national agencies.
- The dual work on organising communities and linking them to Local Government Units, while influencing Local Government Units to recognise communities as their partners, allowed maximum engagement and ensured an enabling environment for IRM.
- A successful partnership requires collaboration and alignment of policy asks. In the attempt to make the Manila Bay Sustainable Development Master Plan IRM-sensitive, partner's individual, unaligned engagement prevented the achievement of tangible results and inclusion of community needs.

Key publications & tools

- [Resilience and Innovation Learning Hub](#) – a knowledge sharing platform by CARE and ACCORD for civil society and authorities in the Philippines.
- [Training on Disaster Preparedness and Contingency Planning](#) – a practical manual on IRM for communities and local authorities.
- [Risk Analysis Of The MANATUTI River System, Metro Manila, Philippines: An Urban Landscape Approach](#) – an example of a landscape-level, holistic risk assessment ([see also this video](#)).
- [Climate Adaptation Finance Study Report – Philippines](#) – assessing whether international donors' reporting of adaptation finance is reliable, and if these activities are gender-sensitive and targeting the poorest and most climate vulnerable.
- [Combating Disasters By Protecting Ecosystems Using A Landscape Approach](#) – case study on nature-based solutions for DRR ([video here](#)).

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PARTNERS FOR RESILIENCE
Working together on disasters, climate, ecosystems