

**COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE PHILIPPINES**

**CALL FOR INPUTS IN RELATION TO THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL RESOLUTION A/HRC/RES/44/7 ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE**

**January 15, 2021**

1. The Commission on Human Rights of the Philippines (CHRP),[[1]](#footnote-1) as the country’s national human rights institution (NHRI) that monitors the Philippine government’s compliance with international treaty obligations on human rights, submits these inputs for the consideration of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for their forty-seventh session to the Human Rights Council an analytical study on the promotion and the protection of the rights of older persons in the context of climate change.
2. The inputs from the Commission took into consideration local and international reports from government, civil society, the media, and international non-government organizations. This submission also utilized the Commission’s own documentation of independent monitoring activities and statements, which were subjected to the internal deliberations of the Commission En Banc.

**Please describe the impacts of the adverse effects of climate change on the full and effective enjoyment of the human rights of older persons. Where possible, please share specific examples and stories.**

1. The temperature in the Philippines has been increasing at 0.1-0.3°C per decade, the sea level has been increasing to one to three millimeters each year. There has been a decrease in the amount of rainfall in the Luzon and Mindanao regions. Heatwaves, droughts, floods and tropical cyclones have also been happening more frequently. There is also a problem with water supply that has affected food production.[[2]](#footnote-2)
2. The effects of climate change are already being experienced globally through more extreme weather events and the resulting impacts on people’s lives, health and wellbeing. Growing proportions of older people are increasingly exposed to risks, especially in low- and middle-income countries, which are the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.[[3]](#footnote-3) There is growing evidence from national disaster loss data that older people are disproportionately more likely to die as a result of typhoons due to mobility issues, lack of evacuation assistance and inadequate evacuation facilities, and disrupted access to critical health and medical care.[[4]](#footnote-4) Older persons and persons with disability, injury, and/or chronic illness in the affected areas who are among the most vulnerable groups, especially where they have become separated from their families and where they are unable to access social services, especially in northwest Leyte where older persons, especially older women, are unable to access services.[[5]](#footnote-5)
3. Loss of documentation for older people in Capiz and Iloilo was a challenge for accessing state subsidised healthcare benefits. In Tacloban and Palo at the end of November, older men and women reported being overlooked for support to meet health needs related to ageing and pre-existing conditions.[[6]](#footnote-6)
4. In the end of November 2013, the number of older persons (60+) living alone in Leyte was significant. These older persons were unable to access adequate food sources due to immobility and difficulties in crossing the terrain. Furthermore, they were unable to secure income and thus could not purchase food from the markets to meet basic needs.[[7]](#footnote-7)
5. In Tacloban and Palo, older people reported concerns about livelihoods, as they were being excluded from cash-for-work schemes. All had had gainful employment prior to the typhoon and not all of them were a part of a family that ensured they could benefit from the cash earned by a younger adult in the schemes. In Region VI at end November, most persons in Iloilo needing psycho-social support were older persons.[[8]](#footnote-8)
6. During Typhoon Haiyan in 2013, two-fifths of those who died were older people despite them comprising only 8% of the local population.[[9]](#footnote-9) Areas most severely affected by the typhoon all have proportions of older people higher than the national average: Disabled and older people are among the most vulnerable groups, especially where they have become separated from their families.[[10]](#footnote-10)
7. A 78-year-old man was reported to have died after suffering a stroke, as he was being evacuated along with thousands of others when typhoon Goni hit the Philippines in November 2020.[[11]](#footnote-11) A week after, Typhoon Vamco hit and the casualties involved a 68-year old male from Daet, and a 70-year old man who died after slipping and falling to the floor.[[12]](#footnote-12) In Benguet, a 60-year old man was killed after a clump of bamboo fell on top of his house due to strong winds.[[13]](#footnote-13)
8. A 67-year old woman and 62-year old woman died due to a landslide caused by Tropical Depression Vicky in Leyte.[[14]](#footnote-14)

**Please describe any specific policy, legislation, practice or strategy that addresses the connection between climate change and the rights of older persons. In particular, please share any information related to policies that ensure the participation of older persons in the design, planning, implementation, and monitoring of climate change mitigation and adaptation measures; learning from the knowledge and experience of older persons; as well as supporting the independence and autonomy of older persons. Please note and identify any relevant mechanisms for ensuring accountability for these commitments, including their means of implementation.**

1. The Commission is unable to find specific policy, legislation, practice or strategy that is specifically targeted towards the rights of older persons. However, there are general documents that mention addressing the needs of marginalized sectors in general. At best, the older persons are lumped together with the women and children. These are:
   1. National Climate Change Action Plan 2011-2028[[15]](#footnote-15)
   2. The National Framework Strategy on Climate Change 2010-2022[[16]](#footnote-16)
   3. Philippine Climate Change Assessment[[17]](#footnote-17)
   4. Climate Change and the Philippines Executive Brief[[18]](#footnote-18)
2. The 2014 National Disaster Response Plan mentions older persons once, particularly on ensuring the nutritional status of affected population.[[19]](#footnote-19)
3. The National Economic and Development Authority’s Disaster Rehabilitation and Recovery Planning Guide takes into consideration the elderly, highlighting the need to establish disaggregated data, including the vulnerable sectors, which particularly mentions the elderly. It also raises the specific cross-cutting issues and concerns that can come up in establishing strategies, which mentions that the specific concerns of the vulnerable groups, including those of the elderly should be addressed.[[20]](#footnote-20)
4. Even the national law, Republic Act No. 9729, that is geared towards addressing climate change does not specifically mention older persons as part of the vulnerable groups affected by climate change having mentioned only the poor, women and children.[[21]](#footnote-21) In its amendment, the particular mention of older persons was still not made.[[22]](#footnote-22)

**Please share a summary of any relevant data that captures how the adverse effects of climate change have affected older persons, taking into account multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination (i.e. discrimination based on a combination of multiple grounds, including disability, gender, race, colour, sex, language, religion, nationality and migration status) – including in older age cohorts.**

1. Discrimination was observed in the response to the aftermath of Typhoon Haiyan.[[23]](#footnote-23)

**Please describe any mechanisms and tools that are in place to measure and monitor the impacts of climate change on the full and effective enjoyment of the human rights of older persons.**

1. Due to the lack of focus on older persons, the Commission is unable to find any mechanisms and tools that are targeted towards older persons with particular focus on climate change.

**Please identify and share examples of good practices and challenges in the promotion, protection and fulfillment of the rights of older persons in the context of the adverse effects of climate change, including any age-appropriate or sensitive support services that are provided.**

1. In terms of challenges, we reiterate the answers observed during the response to Typhoon Haiyan – (1) difficulty of accessing social services, (2) lack of aggregated data, (3) lost identification documents that prevented access to social services, (4) lack of age-appropriate interventions in the aftermath of the typhoon.[[24]](#footnote-24)
2. It’s a challenge that the national framework does not include particular focus on the rights and needs of older persons. Both the National Climate Change Action Plan 2011-2028 and the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan (NDRRMP) 2011-2028[[25]](#footnote-25) do not have particular focus on older persons.
3. The Commission has likewise not established the nexus between the rights of older persons and climate change. Although the Commission is very active in promoting and protecting the rights of older persons,[[26]](#footnote-26) having issued advisories and statements on the enjoyment of their rights, the focus has yet to touch upon climate change. There is opportunity for the Commission to focus on this given that the Inquiry on Climate Change was also initiated by this Commission.
4. Coalition of Services of Elderly implements an inclusive community-based Disaster Risk Reduction programthat involves all sectors, particularly the older people, from planning to the implementation of disaster risk reduction activities.[[27]](#footnote-27) They also engage also engage their network of Older People Organizations (OPOs) in carrying out rapid assessments and distributing relief items to the most affected older persons in the interventions. Some innovative programs involve Mobile Health Care Service and Age-friendly Help Desks.[[28]](#footnote-28)

**Please include examples and good practices that highlight international and multilateral cooperation and approaches that are implemented in close consultations with and with the active involvement of older persons, including through their representative organizations.**

1. The Commission is unable to find information on the government on any cooperation done with the active involvement of older persons on climate change.
2. The Commission is actively engaged with the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) Working Group on Ageing on pressing issues involving older persons. Even in the international sphere, there are still no initiatives that the Commission has taken part of that relates with the rights of older persons and climate change.
3. There is opportunity in the creation of the National Commission of Senior Citizens[[29]](#footnote-29) as established by Republic Act No. 11350 last 25 July 2019. The law includes a provision that it shall represent the Philippines in international functions, fora, or conferences on senior citizens and establish and maintain linkages with the international senior citizen or senior citizen-serving institutions or organizations and counterpart government agencies of other states.

**Please provide additional information you believe would be useful to support climate action that promotes the full and effective enjoyment of the rights of older persons.**

1. There is opportunity in engaging with the GANHRI Working Group on Ageing to bridge the gap of the lacking connection between the rights of older persons and climate change.
2. Awareness is lacking in the Philippines in terms of the link between climate change and the rights of older persons. Awareness raising still needs to be done. Although some of the impacts on older persons were observed during the aftereffects of Typhoon Haiyan, the attention towards addressing these was not sustained in the laws, policies and strategies crafted years after. This agenda still needs to be established in the consciousness of the stakeholders. The specific needs of older persons are still not highlighted and are usually lumped together as part of the vulnerable groups.

1. As the National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) of the Philippines, the CHRP has the mandate vested by the 1987 Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines and the Paris Principles to promote and protect the full range of human rights including civil and political rights, and economic, social and cultural rights. It has the responsibility to regularly report and monitor human rights situations and violations, and recommend steps in advancing the realization of human rights and dignity of all. The Commission has “A”-status accreditation from the Sub-Committee for Accreditation. It is a member of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Applied Sustainability Monitor, Understanding the Impact of Climate Change on Extreme Weather Conditions in the Philippines, December 2020 – January 2021, *available at* <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1nht8tGcfICBOqUWMKLNS1vuX_fIuGlae/view> (last accessed 13 January 2021). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. HelpAge International Global Network, Climate change in the ageing world, December 2015, *available at* <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/COP21_HelpAge_PositionPaper_Final_0.pdf> (last accessed 13 January 2021). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. *Id*. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. ACAPS, *infra* note 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. *Id*. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. HelpAge International Global Network, *supra* note 2. See Philippine Climate Change Assessment, *available at* <https://climate.gov.ph/files/PhilCCA-WG2.pdf> (last accessed 13 January 2021). [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. ACAPS, Secondary Data Review: Philippines Typhoon Yolanda, *available* at <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/assessments/140111%20SDR%20Yolanda%20Philippines%20final.pdf> (last accessed 13 January 2020) *citing* UNICEF, Typhoon Haiyan Strategic Response Plan, 10 December 2013, *available* *at* <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Strategic%20Response%20Plan%20-%20Philippines%2010-Dec-2013.pdf> (last accessed 13 January 2020). [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Raul Dancel, At least 10 killed, over 30 million affected as super typhoon slams the Philippines, TheStraitsTimes, 3 November 2020,

    *available at* <https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/at-least-2-killed-over-30m-affected-as-supertyphoon-slams-the-philippines> (last accessed 13 January 2021). [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. CNN Philippines, Typhoon Ulysses kills at least 13, leaves 15 missing, CNNPhilippines, 12 November 2020, *available at*

    <https://www.cnnphilippines.com/news/2020/11/12/ulysses-death-toll.html> (last accessed 13 January 2021). [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. *Id*. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. CNN Philippines, 5 reported dead as ‘Vicky’ triggers landslides, floods, CNNPhilippines, 19 December 2020, *available at* <https://cnnphilippines.com/news/2020/12/19/Vicky-impact-Visayas-Mindanao.html> (last accessed 14 January 2021). [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Climate Change Commission, National Climate Change Action Plan 2011-2028, *available at* <https://climate.gov.ph/files/NCCAP-TechDoc%20-%2022%20October%202012.pdf> (last accessed 14 January 2021). [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Office of the President Climate Change Commission, National Framework Strategy on Climate Change, *available at* <https://www.neda.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/nfscc_sgd.pdf> (last accessed 14 January 2021). [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Oscar M. Lopez Center, et al., 2017 Philippine Climate Change Assessment: Impacts, Vulnerabilities, Adaptation, *available at* [https://climate.gov.ph/files/PhilCCA-WG2.pdf](https://climate.gov.ph/files/PhilCCA-WG2.pdf%20(14) (last accessed 14 January 2021). [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Climate Change Commission, Climate Change and the Philippines Executive Brief No. 2018-01, *available at* <https://climate.gov.ph/files/CC_Executive-Brief_V32.compressed.pdf> (last accessed 14 January 2021). [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council, National Disaster Response Plan, *available at* <http://ndrrmc.gov.ph/attachments/article/1334/NDRP_Hydro_Meteorological_Hazards_as_of_2014.pdf> (last accessed 14 January 2021). [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. National Economic and Development Authority, Disaster Rehabilitation and Recovery Planning Guide, *available at* <http://ndrrmc.gov.ph/attachments/category/12/Disaster_Rehabilitation_and_Recovery_Planning_Guide_NEDA.pdf> (last accessed 14 January 2021). [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Republic Act No. 9729, *available at* <https://climate.gov.ph/public/ckfinder/userfiles/files/Knowledge/RA%209729.pdf> (last accessed 14 January 2021). [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Republic Act No. 10174, *available at* <https://climate.gov.ph/public/ckfinder/userfiles/files/Knowledge/RA10174-PSF.pdf> (last accessed 14 January 2021). [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. *See* ACAPS, *supra* note 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. *Id*. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council, National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan (NDRRMP) 2011-2028, *available at* <http://ndrrmc.gov.ph/attachments/article/41/NDRRM_Plan_2011-2028.pdf> (last accessed 14 January 2021). [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. See Commission on Human Rights, Inputs submitted to the UN Independent Expert on the Enjoyment of All Human Rights by Older Persons, *available* at <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/OlderPersons/Submissions/COVID-19/Commission-on-Human-Rights-Philippines.docx> (last accessed 14 January 2021). [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Coalition of Services of the Elderly, What We Do: Disaster Risk Management, *available at* <https://cose.org.ph/disaster-risk-and-management/> (last accessed 15 January 2021). [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. *Id*. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Republic Act No. 11350, *available at* <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/downloads/2019/07jul/20190725-RA-11350-RRD.pdf> (last accessed 14 January 2021). [↑](#footnote-ref-29)