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**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**  
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## OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

# GUIDELINES FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS ON THE STRENGTHENING OF EVACUATION SYSTEMS USING THE LOCAL DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND MANAGEMENT FUND (LDRRMF)

Memorandum Circular No. 122 series of 2018  
August 8, 2018

### 1. BACKGROUND

Taking into account the increasing frequency and intensity of hazard events occurring in the Philippines, evacuation is *often* resorted to as a life-saving measure. Despite numerous experiences in Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM), ensuring the effectiveness of evacuation operations remains a challenge. Consequently, evacuees tend to face more threats to health, safety, and overall wellbeing *within* evacuation facilities especially if and when immediately returning to their own dwellings becomes difficult or impossible, thus requiring extended stay. Problems such as this can be viewed in light of prevailing evacuation strategies, which includes the pervasive use of schools, covered courts and other Government infrastructures that were *not* built to serve this purpose. Other unfavourable impacts of such practice are the interruption of classes when schools are activated as evacuation centres as well as the disruption of services in the case of Government buildings/offices.

Apart from the issues mentioned, the *fragmented* approach to evacuation is yet to be addressed fully. In some areas, for example, an evacuation centre might be established but weak Early Warning and Evacuation Alert Systems are in place. In others, evacuation and camp management teams are organised and trained, but a resilient and appropriately designed evacuation facility that could have aided in meeting the needs of evacuees is lacking. Either way, both scenarios present gaps that render evacuation operations less-effective, which, in turn, compromises public safety.

Against this backdrop, this Department, as lead agency lead for disaster preparedness, by virtue of Sec. 5 of R.A. 10121, recognises the need for Local Government Units (LGUs) to perceive and approach evacuation *holistically*. As such, it intends, through this issuance, to encourage and guide LGUs to mobilise its resources as a means of ensuring that all aspects of evacuation—infrastructure, equipage, human resource capacity building, and others—are equally strengthened.

### 2. PURPOSE

To strengthen the evacuation system, this policy is issued to enjoin Local Government Units (LGUs) to prioritise, as part of their efforts to effectively prevent, mitigate, prepare for, respond to, rehabilitate and recover from adverse impacts of disasters. As such, LGUs at all levels are urged to *invest*, using a portion of the seventy percent (70%) of their respective LDRRMF for disaster prevention and mitigation, preparedness, rehabilitation and recovery in the following:

- 2.1. The construction of *durable, safe, and properly-designed* evacuation facilities that meet national standards for building safety, and are *responsive* to the needs of its prospective users, as appropriate to the local contexts within which they will be established;
- 2.2. Institutional strengthening and capacity development initiatives to support *all* aspects of evacuation operations as articulated in Section 5.2 of this Memorandum Circular.

### 3. LEGAL COMPLIANCE

The Department of the Interior and Local Government is required to manage its policy documentation within a legal framework. This Memorandum Circular is hereby promulgated based on the National laws, issuances, strategic and regulatory frameworks, as well as international regulations and agreements cited below:

- 3.1. Republic Act No. 7160 or the "Local Government Code of 1991" outlines the:
  - 3.1.1. Responsibilities of LGUs to espouse the general welfare (Sec. 16), deliver basic services to constituents (Sec. 17);
  - 3.1.2. Duties of Local Chief Executives (Section 444(b)(1)(vii), Section 455(b)(1)(vii), Section 465(b)(1)(vii)) and the Sanggunian (Section 447 (a)(1)(iv), Section 458(a)(1)(iv), Section 468(a)(1)(iv)) at the Municipal, City, and Provincial levels in relation to man-made and natural disasters and calamities.
- 3.2. Republic Act No. 10121 or the "Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010" provides that:
  - 3.2.1. Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Councils at the provincial, city, and municipal levels are responsible for recommending the implementation of forced and pre-emptive evacuation of local residents, if necessary (Sec. 11(b)(3));
  - 3.2.2. DRRM Offices at all levels of local government shall be tasked to "respond to and manage the adverse effects of emergencies and carry out recovery activities in the affected area, ensuring that there is an efficient mechanism for immediate delivery of food, shelter and medical supplies for women and children, endeavour to create a special place where internally-displaced mothers can find help with breastfeeding, feed and care for their babies and give support to each other" (Sec. 12(c)(16)).
- 3.3. Republic Act No. 9710, otherwise known as the "2009 Magna Carta for Women" and its Implementing Rules and Regulations state that:
  - 3.3.1. Women have the right to security during crises and in *all* phases of disaster management, thus highlighting their safety against all forms of Gender-Based Violence and the inclusion of psychosocial and livelihood support, the delivery of comprehensive health services, and protection during pregnancy in disaster response (Sec. 10);
  - 3.3.2. Proactive measures should be taken to ensure that sexual violence is prevented in evacuation and relocation sites by:
    - 3.3.2.1. Considering the safety of women and children as key criteria for selecting evacuation sites;
    - 3.3.2.2. Providing separate, well lit, and secure latrines for men and women;
    - 3.3.2.3. Designating bathing facilities that do not compromise privacy;
    - 3.3.2.4. Regular patrolling, preferably by female police officers; and
    - 3.3.2.5. Prohibiting gambling and the use/consumption of alcohol and illegal drugs.
- 3.4. Republic Act No. 10821, otherwise known as "Children's Emergency Relief and Protection Act" and its Implementing Rules and Regulations call for the implementation of measures to ensure the safety and well-being of children in times of disasters and other emergencies. It also emphasises the responsibilities of government and non-government entities involved in emergency and humanitarian operations with respect to meeting children's special needs within the context of evacuation. In addition, Section 5 of R.A. 10821 and Rule 5 of its IRR discourages using schools or child development centres as evacuation centres except in cases where no other place or structure is available to serve this purpose.
- 3.5. NDRRMC-DBM-DILG Joint Memorandum Circular 2013-1 imparts detailed guidance on the proper allocation and use of the Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Fund as provided in Section 21 of R.A. 10121.

- 3.6. DSWD-DILG-DOH-DepEd Joint Memorandum Circular No. 1 series of 2013, entitled "Guidelines on Evacuation Centre Coordination and Management" outlines the basic facilities and standards for evacuation centres as well as other logistical procedures and organisational structures necessary for carrying out effective evacuation operations.
- 3.7. The National DRRM Plan for 2011-2018 includes in its outcomes the (a) safe and timely evacuation of effected communities, (b) provision of temporary shelter and/or addressing structural needs, and (c) delivery of basic social services to disaster victims whether inside or outside an evacuation facility.
- 3.8. The National Disaster Preparedness Plan (NDPP) for 2015-2028 reiterates the provisions of major policy frameworks—both National and international—also cited herein, whilst giving more emphasis on pre-disaster actions and the Minimum Standards for Disaster Preparedness required for LGUs.
- 3.9. The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, specifically, Priority 4 (*Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to "Build Back Better" in recovery, rehabilitation, and reconstruction*) calls for the following:
- 3.9.1. Promotion of regular disaster preparedness, response and recovery exercises, including evacuation drills, training and the establishment of area-based support systems, with a view of ensuring rapid and effective response to disasters and related displacement, including access to safe shelter, essential food and non-food relief supplies, as appropriate to local needs (Par. h)
  - 3.9.2. Strengthening the capacity of local authorities to evacuate persons living in disaster-prone areas (Par. m);
- 3.10. The UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed., 2004), espouses the following duties, entitlements within its provisions:
- 3.10.1. Principle 3(1) states that national authorities have the primary duty and responsibility to provide protection and humanitarian assistance to Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) within their jurisdiction;
  - 3.10.2. Principle 7(2) indicates that authorities undertaking such displacement shall ensure, to the greatest practicable extent, that proper accommodation is provided to the displaced persons and that satisfactory conditions of safety, health, nutrition, and hygiene and the non-separation of family members are achieved;
  - 3.10.3. Principle 18 emphasises the rights of IDPs to adequate standards of living, including the provision of essential food and potable water, basic shelter and housing, appropriate clothing, and essential medical and sanitation services and also calls for ensuring the full participation of women in planning and distributing basic supplies;
  - 3.10.4. Principle 25(1) further stresses that it is the primary duty and responsibility of national authorities to provide humanitarian assistance to IDPs.
- 3.11. The minimum standards for shelter, settlement, and non-food items of the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response (2011), recognises the human right to live in security, peace, and dignity, as a vital determinant of survival in the initial stages of a disaster event. As such, it highlights the importance of the following:
- 3.11.1. Provision of adequate space and protection from environmental threats to human health;
  - 3.11.2. Availability of services, facilities, materials, and infrastructure;
  - 3.11.3. Sustainable access to natural and common resources, potable water, energy for domestic activities, sanitation facilities, food storage, and emergency services; and
  - 3.11.4. Appropriate siting of settlements.

#### **4. SCOPE AND COVERAGE:**

This policy covers Local Chief Executives (LCEs) and members of the *Sanggunian* at all levels of local government, Local DRRM Councils/Committees, Local Development Councils, Local Finance Committees, DILG Regional Directors and all DILG Field Officers within their jurisdiction, and the Regional Governor of the ARMM.

#### **5. POLICY CONTENT**

In accordance with the laws, policies, and regulatory and strategic frameworks cited in Section 3, this Memorandum Circular shall provide LGUs with the appropriate guidance on the following matters:

##### **5.1. ESTABLISHMENT OF RESILIENT EVACUATION CENTRES:**

###### **5.1.1. Selection of Construction Sites:**

- 5.1.1.1. The evacuation facility must be established on stable and safe areas not susceptible to landslides, flooding, storm surges, and other hydrological and meteorological hazards. Site selection must therefore be based on the *most current* risk assessments using geo-hazard maps produced by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Mines and Geosciences Bureau (DENR-MGB), the Department of Science and Technology-Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (DOST-PAGASA), and the DOST-Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (DOST-PHOVOLCS);
- 5.1.1.2. It shall *not* be constructed within or very close to:
  - 5.1.1.2.1. The premises of sites and structures such as military bases, camps of insurgent groups, power plants, factories, and others, where the likelihood of the occurrence of human-induced disasters is high;
  - 5.1.1.2.2. Areas categorised as 'no-build-zones' or easement areas defined in the Water Code, Civil Code and Revised Forestry Code of the Philippines, excluding areas for critical government infrastructure in support of economic development (i.e., ports, fish landings, etc.);
  - 5.1.1.2.3. Within hazard zones, unless otherwise permitted in *Section 6 of DENR-DILG-DND-DPWH-DOST Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2014-01 on the "Adoption of Hazard Zone Classification in Areas Affected by Typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan) and Providing Guidelines for Activities therein"* as applicable in other areas within the Philippines.
- 5.1.1.3. Centres for evacuation must be *strategically located* to enable immediate access to basic goods, services, and utilities (e.g. healthcare facilities, markets, water, electricity, communication);
- 5.1.1.4. Sites to be selected for this purpose must allow for year-round access to and from the evacuation facility by means of vehicular transportation most especially before, during, and after a hazard event.

###### **5.1.2. Minimum Design Requirements:**

- 5.1.2.1. The evacuation centre must be ~~also~~ designed and constructed in compliance with the National Building Code and should withstand wind speeds of *three hundred kilometres per hour* (300 kph) and moderate seismic activity of *at least* 8.0 magnitude on the Richter Scale. Failure to comply will result in the filing of appropriate civil, criminal, and/or administrative cases against local public officials/employees concerned by appropriate parties;
- 5.1.2.2. It shall be designed in such a way that good fresh air ventilation and high levels of natural light are ensured upon operation;

5.1.2.3. It shall allow for the installation of temporary partitions within the facility as a means of maintaining the privacy of evacuees;

5.1.2.4. It shall have, at the minimum, the following basic features:

- 5.1.2.4.1. DRRM and/or Camp Management Desk or Office;
- 5.1.2.4.2. Separate toilet and bathing facilities designated for males and females, with a facility-to-user ratio of 1:20 persons;
- 5.1.2.4.3. At least one (1) toilet per evacuation centre specially designed for Persons with Disabilities;
- 5.1.2.4.4. An average space allocation of *1.33 square metres per person* for shelter and accommodation, based on the DSWD standard of 40 square metres per 6 families considering the average family size of 5 persons per family
- 5.1.2.4.5. Breastfeeding area/lactation station;
- 5.1.2.4.6. Other facilities and physical provisions that will help guarantee humane living conditions of evacuees and aide in ensuring that needs of special population groups (e.g. women, children, the elderly, PWDs, and Indigenous Peoples) are met. Such physical provisions include, but are not limited to access ramps, child-friendly spaces, and healthcare facilities;
- 5.1.2.4.7. Rainwater harvesting and collection facilities.
- 5.1.2.4.8. Other standards and facilities prescribed in *DSWD-DILG-DOH-DepEd Joint Memorandum Circular No. 1 series of 2013, entitled "Guidelines on Evacuation Centre Coordination and Management"* (e.g. community kitchen, solid waste disposal facilities, laundry spaces, etc.) should also be considered in the building's design, provided that spatial (i.e. land area, floor area), demographic (i.e. number and type of possible users/evacuees), and resource-related factors are taken into account.

### **5.1.3. Operations and Maintenance and Rehabilitation of Evacuation Facilities:**

- 5.1.3.1. To ensure the structural integrity and the safety of possible evacuees, the mandatory audit of infrastructures used as evacuation centres shall be conducted by the Provincial/City/Municipal Engineer and/or the Building Official at least once every year *and* immediately after the occurrence of a hazard or disaster event. Should external expertise be required, LGUs are advised to directly communicate with the nearest Field Office of the DPWH to seek guidance in carrying out the infrastructure audit.
- 5.1.3.2. LGUs shall utilise part of the 70% of their LDRRMF for disaster prevention and mitigation, preparedness, response, rehabilitation and recovery for the periodic maintenance and/or improvement of evacuation centres; likewise, for their rehabilitation and/or reconstruction, should these be damaged in the event of any disaster.
- 5.1.3.3. In the event that *dedicated* evacuation centres are already in place, LGUs shall allocate and mobilise, from the same fund source, monetary resources for the upgrading of these facilities to comply with resilient infrastructure standards as specified in Section 5.1.2 of this Memorandum Circular;

## **5.2. INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING AND CAPACITY BUILDING INITIATIVES ON EVACUATION OPERATIONS AND MANAGEMENT:**

In preparation for possible adverse effects of impending disasters, LGUs are expected to maintain the high level of effectiveness of evacuation as a life-saving measure by employing comprehensive strategies and holistic approaches to operations. To *complement* efforts to establish resilient evacuation centres, LGUs shall, at the minimum, as provided in the "*Operation*

*LISTO Manual for Early Preparedness* as elaborated in the *"NDPP Preparedness Minimum Standards"*, carry out the following:

- 5.2.1. Formulate and issue policies on pre-emptive and forced evacuation for dissemination throughout its jurisdiction;
- 5.2.2. Put in place Early Warning and Evacuation Alert Systems;
- 5.2.3. Full dissemination of a Family Guide to Action on Warning and Evacuation Alerts;
- 5.2.4. Establishment of integrated information systems constituted by: **(a)** hazard maps from DENR and/or DOST where specific areas in the community susceptible to floods, landslides, storm surges, and other hazards are identified; **(b)** maps with identified hazard-prone maps with hazard-specific evacuation routes consistent with those in the Contingency Plan, **(c)** vulnerable population groups (e.g. women, children, PWDs, the elderly, etc.), **(d)** residents-at-risk and potential evacuees, **(e)** maps of lifelines and basic facilities (e.g. markets and groceries, water supply systems, healthcare stations/hospitals, etc.), **(f)** inventory of food supplies, rescue and evacuation equipment, medical supplies, and other non-food items, **(g)** human resources, and other data sets considered important for effective DRRM operations;
- 5.2.5. Develop and implement protocols or Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for evacuation, provision of medical and psychosocial services, relief distribution, and others as applicable;
- 5.2.6. Organise or create structures such as, among others, Evacuation Committees and Teams, Camp Management Committees and Teams, Medical Services Psychosocial Support Units, and, as prescribed in Section 2(a) of R.A. 10821, a Child Protection Committee within the evacuation centre and other transitional sites;
- 5.2.7. Conduct evacuation drills t once every three months;
- 5.2.8. Purchase of food (minimum of 300 packs for at least 3 days per NDPP Minimum Standards, Vol. 2) and non-food items (e.g. clothing, bedding, etc.) intended for evacuees;
- 5.2.9. Invest in strengthening the capacities of concerned LGU officials, functionaries, and volunteers in the following areas such as, but not limited to: **(a)** Community-based Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (CBDRRM), **(b)** Contingency Planning, **(c)** Camp Coordination and Management, **(f)** First Aid and Basic Life Support, **(g)** Provision of Psychosocial Support, and **(h)** Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WaSH) in Emergencies.

### **5.3. USE OF THE LOCAL DRRM FUND TO ENSURE EFFECTIVE EVACUATION OPERATIONS:**

The programmes, projects and activities specified herein are consistent with those identified in *Section 5.1 to Section 5.5 of NDRRMC-DBM-DILG Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2013-1*, which further elaborates Section 21 of R.A. No. 10121 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations on the allocation and use of the LDRRMF. As such, the LDRRMF can be utilised to implement initiatives such as the construction of resilient evacuation centres and their rehabilitation as stated in item 5.4.2; institutional strengthening; and all others that support effective evacuation operations, provided that:

- 5.3.1. Such are incorporated in the Local DRRM Plans, and integrated in the approved Annual Investment Programme (AIP) of the LGU;
- 5.3.2. The procurement of supplies and equipment chargeable against the LDRRMF shall be subject to R.A. No. 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act" and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.
- 5.3.3. The utilisation of the LDRRMF for purposes stated herein shall be reported in compliance with the accounting guidelines issued by the Commission on Audit (COA), as provided by *COA Circular 2012-002, entitled "Accounting and Reporting Guidelines for the Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Fund (LDRRMF) of Local Government Units (LGUS, National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Fund (NDRRMF) given to LGUs and Receipts from Other Sources"*.

#### **5.4. USE OF THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR BUILDING & REHABILITATING EVACUATION FACILITIES**

- 5.4.1. The construction or rehabilitation of evacuation centres, including lot purchase or this purpose, can also be charged against the 20% Local Development Fund, as provided by item 3.1.5 of DILG-DBM Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2017-1;
- 5.4.2. Initiatives such as those specified in item 5.4.1 above shall be included in LGUs' Annual Investment Programme (AIP);

#### **5.5. ASSISTANCE OF A HIGHER-LEVEL LGUs IN IMPROVING EVACUATION SYSTEMS IN THEIR CONSTITUENT LGUs:**

The "Local Government Code of 1991 (R.A. 7160)" provides that provinces with respect to cities, municipalities, and barangays (Sec. 459) as well as cities (Sec. 448) and municipalities (Sec. 440) with respect to barangays within their territorial jurisdiction shall provide technical, financial, administrative, logistical, and legal support to component LGUs in the event that their inherent capacities to strengthen evacuation systems are inadequate. As such:

- 5.5.1. Local Chief Executives (LCEs) of provincial, city, and municipal shall carry out the emergency measures necessary during and in the aftermath of man-made and natural disasters and calamities as prescribed in Sec. 465(b)(1)(vii), Sec. 455(b)(1)(vii), and Sec. 444(b)(1)(vii), respectively.
- 5.5.2. The *Sangguniang Panlalawigan* (Sec. 458(a)(1)(iv)), *Sangguniang Panlungsod* (Sec. 458(a)(1)(iv)), and the *Sangguniang Bayan* (Sec. 447(a)(1)(iv)) as the legislative body of the province, city, and municipality, respectively, shall adopt measures to protect inhabitants of the LGU from the harmful effects of man-made or natural disasters and calamities, and to provide relief services and assistance for victims during and in the aftermath of said disasters or calamities and their return to productive livelihood following said events.

#### **6. DISSEMINATION**

The Regional Directors of this Department shall disseminate this Memorandum Circular to Field Offices and LGUs within their territorial jurisdiction.

#### **7. EFFECTIVITY**

This Memorandum Circular shall take effect *immediately* until advised otherwise.

  
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*Officer-in-Charge*

   
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*Inquiries and feedback concerning this Memorandum Circular shall be directed to the operating unit specified below for appropriate action:*

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