

Bridging Policy and Practice: A Review Of RA 10121 Implementation in A Local Government Unit Under Davao Region

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Abstract

This study evaluates the implementation of Republic Act 10121 in a local government unit within the Davao Region, focusing on disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM) practices. Utilizing a mixed-method approach, it combines quantitative self-assessments from local DRRM managers with qualitative insights from key informant interviews. Findings indicate a generally positive self-assessment regarding disaster preparedness frameworks; however, significant challenges persist, including underutilization of funds, staffing shortages, and inadequate early warning systems. These issues reveal a disconnection between policy and practice, underscoring the need for improved community engagement. The study concludes with targeted recommendations to enhance financial management, strengthen institutional capacity, improve early warning capabilities, and deepen community involvement—ultimately fostering a more resilient and adaptive DRRM framework tailored to the local context of the LGU in the Davao Region.

Keywords: DRRM, Disaster Management Evaluation, RA 10121

Introduction

Disasters remain a major global challenge, especially in developing countries where poverty and rapid urbanization increase vulnerability (Shaw & Krishnamurthy, 2009; UNDRR, 2019). Each year, disasters displace around 25 million people and cause billions in damages, with the poor bearing the brunt of the impact (World Bank Group, n.d.). Climate change has intensified these risks, particularly in the Western Pacific. Although the number of storms has declined since 1990, their severity has increased, with stronger winds, longer landfalls, and more intense rainfall (Camargo et al., 2023). The devastation of Super Typhoon Haiyan in 2013—resulting in millions affected and thousands of dead—highlights the urgent need for effective disaster management (USAID, 2013).

In the Philippines, disaster governance began with PD 1566 (1978), which emphasized response and community preparedness but lacked financial and structural support. To address these gaps, RA 10121, or the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010, was enacted. It introduced a comprehensive Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) framework and mandated the establishment of Local DRRM Offices and Councils.

The law also created the LDRRM Fund, allocating 5% of LGU budgets: 70% for preparedness and 30% as a Quick Response Fund. To ensure accountability and performance, initiatives like the Seal of Good Local Governance (SGLG) and Gawad KALASAG were launched, assessing LGUs based on the four thematic areas of DRRM: prevention and mitigation, preparedness, response, and early recovery and rehabilitation. This study evaluates the implementation of RA 10121 in a local government unit under Davao Region, focusing on how DRRM policies translate into practice amid ongoing climate and development challenges.

Objectives:

This study aims to review the implementation of RA 10121 in a selected LGU under Davao Region, focusing on how national DRRM policies are applied at the local level. Specifically, it seeks to:

1. Assess the LGU's self-rating based on: SGLG Disaster Preparedness Assessment Tool and Gawad KALASAG Assessment Tool
2. Identify best practices in the implementation of RA 10121.
3. Determine key challenges faced by DRRM stakeholders.
4. Examine how local culture and community dynamics influence implementation.

Review of Related Literature

The adoption of Republic Act 10121 in the Philippines has ushered in a transition from reactive response to disasters to proactive DRRM. Yet, local government units (LGUs) still experience institutional and operational gaps. There have been several studies that stressed the need for both scientific and local knowledge integration in developing inclusive and sustainable DRRM plans. Vasileiou et al. (2022) and Cadag and Gaillard (2012) believe that community-based risk mapping and participatory frameworks can be used to improve disaster preparedness by enhancing public involvement and ensuring that interventions respond to local contexts. However, continued use of top-down approaches and lack of adequate integration of local knowledge tends to create reactive policy and not adaptive, risk-informed planning.

Institutional governance and capacity are also determinants of DRRM results. Underutilization of funds, lack of human resources with appropriate skills, and ineffective coordination mechanisms are identified by Domingo and Manejar (2018) as the main impediments to implementation. Gaillard et al. (2007) and Alexander (2021) also share these same conclusions and stress that political will and evidence-based approaches impact policy implementation. Alexander also identifies that political or bureaucratic factors can weaken the effectiveness of DRRM by causing the misuse or omission of disaster information, emphasizing the necessity of accountable, transparent mechanisms for employing evidence in planning.

Infrastructure resilience is another key aspect of effective DRRM. Deelstra and Bristow (2023) show that the inclusion of DRR strategies in regional infrastructure planning cuts both rehabilitation expense and the effects of service loss substantially. Nonetheless, they assert localized and sector-specific interventions are necessary. This perspective is echoed by Wen et al. (2023), who assert that converging disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, and sustainable development is essential to improve overall resilience. Interconnectedness among these fields calls for an integrated approach at the local level—something which remains elusive in most Philippine LGUs.

Moreover, disaster education and risk communication are critical in shaping a culture of preparedness. Kitagawa (2020) posits that most DRRM does not take into account how individuals learn, relying too

often on behaviorist strategies such as drills without activating cognitive and experiential learning processes. This shortens the information campaign and training program effects. A more comprehensive learner-centered methodology—integrating multiple learning theories—is better suited to promote community engagement and enhance DRRM performance. Collectively, these studies present an overall picture of the gaps, opportunities, and contextual considerations that are needed to enhance the local implementation of RA 10121.

Methodology

This study used a mixed-method approach to assess how RA 10121 is implemented in a LGU in the Davao Region. The quantitative part involved a self-assessment using the SGLG and Gawad KALASAG tools to measure how well the LGU meets disaster preparedness standards. The qualitative part involved interviews with three local DRRM managers to better understand their experiences, good practices, and challenges in implementing RA 10121. The data from the assessment tools were interpreted based on their official criteria, while the interview responses were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify key insights.

Results and Discussion

This chapter presents the results and discussion of the research. The presentation is in the following order: (1) SGLG Self-Assessment Rating of Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Managers; (2) Gawad KALASAG Self-Assessment Rating of Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Managers; (3) Best Practices of the RA 10121 Implementation in selected the LGU; (4) Challenges in the Implementation of RA 10121; and (5) Influences of Local Culture and Community Dynamics in the RA 10121 Implementation.

1. SGLG Self-Assessment Rating of Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Managers. The SGLG Assessment Tool for Disaster Preparedness includes 15 indicators with corresponding sub-indicators. Each sub-indicator is rated from 1 (lowest) to 3 (highest). For this study, three DRRM managers from the selected LGU in Davao Region provided self-assessments. Ratings were averaged per indicator to identify strengths and weaknesses, while the overall score reflected the LGU's current level of disaster preparedness under RA 10121.

The SGLG Assessment Tool includes 15 key indicators for disaster preparedness, such as the functionality of local DRRM structures, presence of approved DRRM and land use plans, climate change action plans, contingency plans, proper use of DRRM funds, early warning systems, evacuation protocols, trained response teams, operations centers, community-based plans, and compliance with required documentation for the Gawad KALASAG Seal.

Table 1. Disaster Preparedness Self-Assessment Rating of DRRM Managers in a Local Government Unit of Davao Region Using the SGLG Assessment Toolkit

Government Unit of Davao Region Using the SLEG Assessment Tool					
Indicator		Sub-Indicator			Rating
1	Functional Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council	a	Composition	3	3
		b	Meetings	3	
2	Established Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office	a	LDRRMO Officer	2	2
		b	LDRRMO Staff Compliment	1	
		c	LDRRMO Work Space	3	
3	Approved Provincial Development and Physical Framework Plan or Comprehensive				3

	Land Use Plan			
4	Approved Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan			3
5	Presence of a Local Climate Change Action Plan			3
6	Approved Contingency Plans			3
7	Utilization of the Local Risk Reduction and Management Fund (70% for Disaster Preparedness and Mitigation Components)			1
8	Early Warning System			2
9	Pre-emptive and Forced Evacuation Mechanism			3
10	Established Evacuation Management System and Resources	a	Evacuation Center	2
		b	Evacuation Information Guides	3
		c	Prepositioned Goods, Resources and Services	2
11	Equipped and Trained Search and Rescue or Emergency Response Teams			2
12	LDRRM Operations Center			3
13	Incident Command Systems			2
14	Approved Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plans and Budgets			3
15	Participation and Compliance with the Submission of Required Documents for the GK Seal			3
Overall Rating				2.5

Table 1 summarizes the self-assessment ratings from three DRRM Managers of a LGU in the Davao Region, using the SGLG Assessment Toolkit. The assessment covered 15 indicators with a total of 20 sub-indicators. Out of these, 12 items received a rating of 3, indicating full compliance with the standards set by Republic Act 10121. These areas include the establishment of functional DRRM councils, approved local disaster risk reduction and management plans, and effective early warning systems. Six items were rated 2, suggesting partial compliance and areas needing improvement, such as enhanced training for emergency response teams and better-equipped evacuation centers. Two items received a rating of 1, highlighting significant gaps in compliance, particularly in the utilization of the Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Fund and staffing of the DRRM office. Overall, 60% of the items were rated 3, 30% rated 2, and 10% rated 1, resulting in an average score of 2.5. According to the Gawad KALASAG assessment criteria, this score falls within the 'Beyond Compliant' category.

2. Gawad KALASAG Self-Assessment Rating of Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Managers. The Gawad KALASAG Assessment Tool is designed to help LGUs evaluate their DRRM efforts. It consists of 32 items grouped into six key areas: Structure, Competency, Management System, Enabling Policies, Knowledge Management and Advocacy, and Partnership and Participation. Each item is rated on a scale from 0 to 3, where 3 indicates full compliance and 0 indicates non-compliance. In this study, DRRM managers from a selected LGU in Davao Region used this tool to assess their performance in implementing RA 10121. The average scores for each area were calculated to identify strengths and areas needing improvement, providing a clear picture of the LGU's disaster preparedness and response capabilities.

2.1. Checklist: Structure

Table 2 displays the self-assessment ratings provided by DRRM managers, focusing on the structural aspects of their local disaster management framework. The average rating achieved was 2.55 out of 3,

indicating a generally strong structural foundation. Specifically, out of nine evaluated items, six received the highest score of 3, two were rated 2, and one received a score of 1.

Despite these positive results, the assessment highlighted areas for improvement. Notably, there is a need to establish a dedicated Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (LDRRMO) with a designated LDRRMO IV position at Salary Grade 25. Additionally, appointing division heads for Early Warning and Operations, Administration and Training, and Research and Planning would enhance the organizational structure. Currently, the DRRM functions are integrated within the City Public Order and Safety Office, as stipulated by city ordinance. Creating a separate office would align with the mandates of Republic Act 10121, promoting a more systematic and effective disaster risk management system.

Table 2. Self-Assessment of DRRM Managers Based on the Gawad KALASAG Structure Checklist

Indicator	Score	Rating Equivalent
1 Establishment of LDRRMC	3	if LDRRMC is: (a) established through Sanggunian Ordinance or Resolution or Executive Order; and (b) composition exceeded requirements in RA 10121 (mandatory members with at least four CSOs and at least one private sector representative, both accredited with certification and/or proof of legal personality)
2 Convene the LDRRMC Quarterly or as Necessary	3	Conducted more than the one (1) regular council meeting required every quarter with minutes of the meeting prepared and list of attendance
3 Organization of DRRMC	3	established 100% BDRRMCs through Sanggunian Ordinance or Resolution or Executive Order
4 Secretariat and Executive Arm of LDRRMC	3	(a) maintains a complete database or records of all proceedings of LDRRMC Meetings and adopted policies, guidelines/ protocols/ systems/ plans available within the last 3 years; and (b) provides secretariat support to the LDRRMC and organizes regular conduct of LDRRMC Meetings within the last three years with complete documentation e.g. Minutes of the Meeting with list of attendance
5 Creation of LDRRM Office	1	Presence of (a) Sanggunian Ordinance or Resolution or Executive Order creating the LDRRM Office and (b) at least office facilities for LDRRM Office
6 LDRRMO Staffing / Personnel Compliment	2	Filled-up mandatory positions (Permanent LDRRMO Head + permanent 3 Staff) compliant to Section 5 of NDRRMC-DILG DBM-CSC JMC 2014-1
7 Local LDRRM Officer	2	Meets all the required qualifications such as: (a) permanent LDRRM Officer occupying the Plantilla position with SG level prescribed by the item no. 6 of NDRRMC- DILG-DBM-CSC JMC 2014-1; (b) Educational attainment and eligibility in accordance with item no. 6 of NDRRMC-DILG- DBM-CSC JMC 2014-1; and (c) completion of necessary DRRM-CCA related trainings (At least 5 trainings) as indicated in this toolkit
8 Establishment of Local DRRM	3	(a) With established functional 24/7 OpCen adhering to NDRRMC Standards; (b) with Hot and insured OpCen; (c) identified alternate EOC; (d) presence of SOPs/OpCen Manual; and (e) Updated Inventory of

	Operations Center		Equipment signed by LDRRM Officer/duly designated officer
9	Organization and Competence of local Emergency Response Teams (ERTs)	3	(a) Availability of response equipment/ assets for more than 2 (two) hazards in the locality; (b) Organized ERTs and provided training on ERTs and LDRRMO/C personnel on SRR and Basic ICS with documentations such as Certificate of Trainings and After Activity Report (at least 50% of ERTs); and (c) Provided insurance to LDRRMO/C personnel and organized ERTs in the LGU; and (d) Updated Inventory of Equipment signed by LDRRM Officer/duly designated officer
Average Rating		2.55	Beyond Compliant

2.2. Checklist: Competency

Table 3 shows the self-assessment of DRRM Managers based on the competency checklist, where the average rating was 2.4, indicating good but not excellent compliance with RA 10121. Out of 15 items, six received the highest rating of 3, while the rest scored 2, totaling 36 out of 45. This suggests that while competency in DRRM efforts is strong, there is room for improvement. Key areas to address include updating the Risk Profile and Hazard Maps, developing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for various hazards, and improving coordination with other offices such as the City Planning and Social Welfare Offices to create and track disaster-related programs. These improvements will strengthen disaster competency and resilience.

Table 3. Self-Assessment of DRRM Managers Based on the Gawad KALASAG Competency Checklist

Indicator		Score	Rating Equivalent
1	Facilitation and Support to Risk Assessment	2	conducted CDRA or used GEORISKPH or REDAS with output risk maps with participation of vulnerable sectors
2	Maintenance of Local Risk Maps	2	Local risk map updated within the last three (3) years and prominently displayed of the top two (2) hazard in the locality
3	Conduct of Continuous Disaster Monitoring	2	With SOP EWS compliant with the four elements of a sound EWS (Risk Knowledge, Monitoring and Warning Service, Dissemination and Communication, and Response Capability)
4	Approved Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan	3	(a) Updated, LDRRMC-approved, and Sanggunian-adopted LDRRMP; and (b) LDRRMP reviewed by the reviewing authority with certification compliant to NDRRMC MC 147 s 2017
5	Approved Barangay Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plans	3	100% of lower LGUs with approved C/M/BDRRMP
6	Presence of LCCAP and Climate Change (CC) expenditure tagged AIP	2	with LCCAP approved by the LDC and adopted by the Sanggunian
7	Contingency Plans	3	CPs are formulated / updated for COVID/EREID and approved by LDRRMC, adopted by Sanggunian for at least top two identified hazards within the the last (3)

			three years
8	Monitoring and Evaluation of LDRRMP Implementation	2	with approved LDRRMP with M&E Report every semester
9	Capacity Development Trainings	3	developed pool/s of trainers through the conduct of training of trainers and organized and conducted at least 5 DRRM-related trainings and workshops based on the risk present in their LGUs conducted in the last three (3) years with complete documentation
10	Pre-emptive and Forced Evacuation	2	with: (a) Policy (ordinance, EO, resolution) enforcing the implementation of the pre-emptive or forced evacuation; or (b) SOP on pre-empted or forced evacuation
11	Pre-positioned Stockpiles	3	Properly managed stockpile of relief goods and standby arrangements and MOU/ notarized MOA with local suppliers
12	Camp Coordination and Camp Management	2	(a) with LDRRMC approved Camp Management Plan and its structure; (b) Training Certification of LGU Personnel on CCCM; and (c) documentation reports to disaster response highlighting the functionality of Evacuation Center and other spaces, if applicable
13	Response to and Management of Adverse Effects of Emergencies / Disasters	3	Presence of organized emergency response teams, systems, procedures, protocols; and organized timely and effective GAD-responsive and PWD- inclusive response operations during normal conditions with documentation and timely reporting to appropriate authorities (OCD, DILG, Higher LGUs, etc.)
14	Disaster Rehabilitation and Recovery	2	Rehabilitation and recovery programs, projects and activities in the LDRRMP or RRP implemented
15	Formulation of Rehabilitation and Recovery Program	2	Presence of the following: (a) Updated database of socioeconomic and disaster related statistics and maps (b) LDRRM Office with LDRRM Officer assigned with planning functions (c) List of identified critical areas, assets and population centers (d) LDRRMF and GSIS property insurance
Average Rating		2.4	Fully Compliant

2.3. Checklist: Management System

Table 4 shows the DRRM Managers' self-assessment rating based on the management system checklist, with an average score of 2.66, indicating very satisfactory DRRM initiatives. Two out of three items received the highest rating of 3, suggesting effective DRRM management, particularly in Response Plans and alignment with investment programs. However, a challenge remains in utilizing funds from the 70% allocation of the 5% National Tax Allocation.

Table 4. Self-Assessment of DRRM Managers Based on the Gawad KALASAG Management System Checklist

Indicator		Score	Rating Equivalent
1	Hazard-Specific SOPs	3	with approved, updated, and tested within the last 3 years, hazard-specific SOPs on at least 3 identified hazards within AOR, Situational and / or Incident Reports and Operation LISTO Checklist (Monitoring of LGU's DRRM Actions), and ICS in place
2	Mainstreamed DRR / CCA in CLUP/PDPFP, local development plans and investment programs	3	DHSUD approved risk-informed PDPFP/; approved LDIP with DRR/CCA PPAs aligned with LDRRMP for the year being assessed and AIP
3	Submission of the utilization of the LDRRMF and other DRRM-related resources	2	(a) Approved multi-year LDRRM (a) allocation of 70% for pre-disaster activity and 30% for QRF; (b) LDRRMF Utilization (70% MITIGATION FUND) Rate not lower than 75% based on the LDRRMP; (c) approved annual LDRRMFIP; (d) incorporated in the AIP; (e) 5% of IRA budget allocation for DRRM; (f) timely (monthly) and complete submission of LDRRMF utilization
Average Rating		2.66	Beyond Compliant

2.4. Checklist: Enabling Policies

Table 5 presents the self-assessment rating of the DRRM Managers based on the enabling policies checklist. The sole item under this indicator received a rating of 3, indicating that the LDRRMC is proactive in formulating disaster-related policies, such as 24/7 Operations Center duty, evacuation guidelines, and tree-planting activities.

Table 5. Self-Assessment of DRRM Managers Based on the Gawad KALASAG Enabling Policies Checklist

Indicator		Score	Rating Equivalent
1	LDRRM Council Recommended DRRM-Related Policies	3	proposed legislations, environmental code and ordinances, or policy recommendations related to DRRM initiated by the LDRRMC/O was approved / adopted by the Sanggunian for the year being assessed
Average Rating		3	Beyond Compliant

2.5. Checklist: Knowledge Management and Advocacy

Table 6 presents the self-assessment rating of the DRRM Managers based on the knowledge management and advocacy checklist. An average rating of 3 indicates a well-maintained and updated database. Two items received the highest rating, reflecting compliance with OCD's mandate for regular updates and effective public information campaigns.

Table 6. Self-Assessment of DRRM Managers Based on the Gawad KALASAG Knowledge management and Advocacy Checklist

Indicator	Score	Rating Equivalent
1 Local Disaster Database Resource	3	(a) Completed, disaggregated, and updated (at least semestral) database of critical infrastructures, human resource, equipment and critical facilities; (b) permanent evacuation centers and its capacity (if use of schools - with Memorandum of Agreement between City Division School and LGU and transition site after the 15 days); (d) updated inventory of maps (same as the other criteria); and (e) posted directory in websites (social media, etc.) and public places
2 Conducted Information Dissemination and Public Awareness	3	(a) With contextualized, laymanized and in popular language IEC programs developed, implemented, and disseminated based on the result of risk assessments for at least 3 hazards and developed effective, practical, sustainable traditional or tech-based innovations IEC program (b) posting of hazard maps and signages displayed in conspicuous areas; and (c) conduct of drills and other exercises
Average Rating	3	Beyond Compliant

2.6. Checklist: Partnership And Participation

Table 7 shows the DRRM Managers' self-assessment based on the partnership and participation checklist, with a perfect average rating of 3. This reflects strong collaboration with LGUs, volunteer groups, and the private sector through activities like the NSED, trainings, forums, and Disaster Resilience Month events.

Table 7. Self-Assessment of DRRM Managers Based on the Gawad KALASAG Partnership and Participation Checklist

Indicator	Score	Rating Equivalent
1 Develop, strengthen and operationalize mechanisms for partnership or networking with the private sector, CSOs, and volunteer groups.	3	(a) mechanisms for partnership or networking of the LGU with other local government units, NGAs, private sector, CSOs, and volunteer groups in all the Four (4) pillars or thematic areas; (b) any means of recognition/s; and (c) Mobilization of the LGU, CSOs, Private Groups, volunteers within the LGU and their resources during emergencies / disasters, with established IMT / EOC, whenever applicable
2 Participation on other external activities set by higher DRRM Councils	3	5 or more identified activities attended within a year
Average Rating	3	Beyond Compliant

2.7. Overall Gawad KALASAG Rating

Table 8 summarizes the Gawad KALASAG rating based on six checklist indicators. Out of a maximum score of 96, the DRRM Managers gave a self-assessed score of 82, averaging 2.56, a rating which is classified as 'Beyond Compliant' under GK criteria.

Table 8. Overall Gawad KALASAG Rating Summary and Average Score

Checklist Indicator		Rating	Count	Total
1	Structure	3	6	18
		2	2	4
		1	1	1
2	Competency	3	6	18
		2	9	18
		1	0	0
3	Management System	3	2	6
		2	1	2
		1	0	0
4	Enabling Policies	3	1	3
		2	0	0
		1	0	0
5	Knowledge Management and Advocacy	3	2	6
		2	0	0
		1	0	0
6	Partnership and Participation	3	2	6
		2	0	0
		1	0	0
Total Rating				82
Total Number of Items				32
Average Rating				2.56

3. Best Practices of the RA 10121 Implementation

This section highlights key practices in the implementation of RA 10121 based on insights from key informant interviews with DRRM Managers. These practices reflect a proactive approach to disaster risk reduction and management.

3.1. Convening the LDRRMC

Regular convening of the LDRRMC ensures that disaster preparedness is consistently discussed, even with the busy schedules of department heads. As one DRRM Manager noted:

“The best thing we do is convene the council regularly. We understand that, since council members are composed of department heads, they are all busy with their respective responsibilities, but we find time to gather them to assess the city’s state in relation to disaster preparedness... These discussions are documented in minutes and preserved, especially for SGLG and Gawad KALASAG purposes.”

– DRRM Manager 2

3.2. Holding Regular Weekly Meetings

Weekly meetings are held within the office and among response teams to assess progress, raise concerns, and set directions.

“I believe our weekly meetings with the Emergency Medical Services and the REACT Team are a key practice... These sessions allow us to discuss the challenges and achievements from the past week, helping us identify successful practices and revise those that aren’t working.” – DRRM Manager 3

“In our division... I conduct regular meetings with the section chiefs to assess the current status of each section. Given the size of the division, it's not possible for me to oversee everyone, so I rely on the section chiefs to effectively monitor and manage their respective teams.” – DRRM Manager 1

3.3. Establishing Partnerships with Barangays

There is active engagement at the barangay level despite limited manpower, highlighting the importance of grassroots participation in DRRM.

“One of the best practices we've recently implemented is reaching out to the barangay level... With the programs and training we conducted this year, I'm proud to say that we've made significant progress in community engagement toward disaster resiliency.” – DRRM Manager 1

“It's encouraging to see that we've become more active lately in working with barangay officials... I'm not sure if this is solely for SGLG-B compliance, but regardless, their efforts are commendable.”

– DRRM Manager 3

3.4. Conducting Public Information Campaigns

Public awareness initiatives are conducted through barangay channels using hazard maps, contingency plans, and risk-related updates.

“Public information dissemination has been a key practice for us... we've been strengthening our efforts by presenting hazard maps, contingency plans, risk information, and updates on disaster programs through the BDRRMC.” – DRRM Manager 2

However, challenges remain in bridging public perception and local implementation:

“That is one of the challenges the barangays must face. We've done our part at the city level... However, as part of the DRRM Committee, it is essential for the barangays to take their own initiative to address this challenge.” – DRRM Manager 2

4. Challenges in the Implementation of RA 10121

Insights from key informant interviews with DRRM Managers reveal several institutional and operational challenges that hinder the realization of a disaster-resilient city as envisioned under RA 10121.

4.1. Misutilization of the Local DRRM Fund (LDRRMF)

The LDRRMF, which is intended for disaster preparedness, has been misused in some cases. The process for accessing the full allocation requires meeting strict compliance thresholds. As one informant explained:

"The biggest challenge is in our utilization. We need to meet the threshold to access 70 percent of the 70 percent of the five percent allocated to us." - DRRM Manager 2

Furthermore, some members of the LDRRMC misuse funds for unrelated projects, justifying them as disaster-related:

"The issue is that some LDRRMC members exploit this funding opportunity, presenting their own initiatives as disaster-related programs in order to access these funds." - DRRM Manager 1

4.2. Gaps in Hazard Monitoring Mechanisms

A lack of early warning systems remains a critical issue. Despite the proactive mandate of RA 10121, one informant stated that the response remains “proactively reactive”:

"It has always been a challenge... due to the lack of sufficient early warning devices to effectively monitor the city's hazard status. Although we are mandated by RA 10121 to be proactive... it is unfortunate to admit that we are still operating reactively— or should I say, 'proactively reactive.'"

-DRRM Manager 3

4.3. Absence of a Standalone DRRM Office

RA 10121 mandates an independent DRRM office, but in some areas, the DRRM office is embedded within the CPOSO. This organizational structure leads to confusion and inefficiency, particularly during emergencies. One manager noted:

"Not having a separate office and being embedded within CPOSO is a problem... critical decisions may not be made by LDRRMO IV." - DRRM Manager 1

Another informant pointed out the difficulty in securing additional manpower due to the lack of a separate office:

"Since we're not yet an office, but rather a division, it's difficult to secure additional manpower, slowing down the procurement process." - DRRM Manager 2

A third informant emphasized the structural issues:

"Our structure is disorganized because we are not an independent office but a division... creating a confusing and inefficient organizational structure." - DRRM Manager 3

4.4. Inadequate Manpower

The lack of an independent DRRM office leads to staffing shortages, which hinder disaster preparedness and response efforts. One manager explained:

"Without a dedicated office, we lack the personnel to handle procurement for various disaster-related PPAs. As a result, our utilization rate remains consistently low because we're overwhelmed with other tasks, particularly during emergencies." - DRRM Manager 2

Another shared:

"We face a shortage of manpower because there is no separate office... with fewer people available to monitor and respond effectively." - DRRM Manager 3

4.5. Provision of Services Beyond Mandate

DRRM personnel are sometimes tasked with services outside the scope of RA 10121, such as transporting dialysis patients, which strains resources. One informant stated:

"We are tasked with pruning services, even though it's not part of our mandate. We also handle the transport of dialysis patients, which incurs significant fuel costs, even though this is considered a social service that should fall under the City Health Office or City Social Welfare and Development Office."

-DRRM Manager 3

5. Influences of Local Culture and Community Dynamics in the RA 10121 Implementation

This section examines how local culture and community dynamics influence the execution and implementation of RA 10121. Insights from the Key Informant Interviews with DRRM Managers highlight issues such as political motivations, delegation of tasks, and an over-reliance on the CDRRMO.

5.1. Political Motivation

Political influences often disrupt the optimal functioning of public service delivery. While DRRM Managers strive to adhere to their duties under RA 10121, political pressures can lead to tasks outside of their mandated functions. One manager explained:

"Sometimes our work becomes difficult. We strive to be as ideal as possible, but politicians often pressure us to perform tasks outside our mandated functions. For example, we are asked to prioritize

patient transport or handle private pruning services. It's hard to say no, especially when someone influential is involved— who wouldn't be afraid to refuse?" - DRRM Manager 3

5.2. Delegation of Tasks to Barangay Secretary

At the barangay level, the delegation of nearly all tasks to the barangay secretary has become a cultural norm. This limits the development of comprehensive plans and creates inefficiencies. As one informant shared:

"Formulating plans, organizing activities—almost everything—has traditionally been the responsibility of the barangay secretary. I had the opportunity to assist my friend in organizing these tasks because she struggled with the heavy workload. It has become a culture where officials delegate everything to the secretary, creating a toxic environment. Ideally, everyone should work together to develop a plan and create a well-coordinated Barangay Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan (BDRRMP)."

- DRRM Manager 1

5.3. Over-Reliance on the CDRRMO

Communities often rely heavily on the local government for disaster-related tasks, which can lead to dependency and inaction at the barangay level. One DRRM Manager pointed out:

"The issue here is dependency. When we provided pruning services in the past, it was passed down to the barangays, and they started requesting more, which often falls outside our mandate. Although the barangays have their own chainsaws, they still deplete the city's resources. This dependency is problematic, as barangays need to learn to be self-sufficient. They are the first responders in their own areas and should take more initiative and responsibility." - DRRM Manager 2

Conclusion

Results of the study offer important observations on the real-world implementation of Republic Act 10121 at the local government level. The self-assessment ratings of local disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM) managers showed a mixed picture of disaster preparedness. The application of the SGLG and Gawad KALASAG evaluation tools showed that although most indicators had positive scores, which mirrored strengths in organizational planning and structure, there were still major weaknesses in financial utilization, staffing adequacy, and early warning systems.

The best practices emerged from the implementation of RA 10121, including the establishment of local disaster risk reduction councils and the development of comprehensive disaster management plans. These initiatives demonstrate a commitment to improving disaster preparedness and response at the local level.

However, the study identified several challenges faced by stakeholders in the implementation of RA 10121. Key issues included the underutilization of disaster preparedness funds, insufficient staffing within DRRM offices, and inadequate community engagement. These challenges hinder the effectiveness of disaster management strategies and the overall readiness of the local government to respond to disasters.

Moreover, the influence of local culture and community dynamics on the implementation of RA 10121 was evident. The limited awareness and participation of community members in disaster preparedness initiatives highlighted the need for stronger engagement strategies to foster a culture of resilience.

In conclusion, while the framework established by RA 10121 provides a solid foundation for disaster risk management, substantial gaps in implementation remain. Addressing these gaps through targeted

interventions will be crucial for enhancing the effectiveness of disaster preparedness and response efforts, ultimately improving the resilience of the community against future disasters.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance the implementation of RA10121 at the local government level.

1. Enhance Financial Management and Utilization.

The local DRRM of the selected LGU should prioritize the effective use of disaster preparedness funds, which are crucial for addressing the hazards faced by the community. Implementing regular audits and training on financial management will ensure that available resources are maximized to strengthen local disaster preparedness initiatives.

2. Address Staffing and Training Needs.

Given the unique geographic and demographic characteristics of the LGUs, filling staffing gaps within the DRRM is essential for effective local response. Ongoing training, particularly in emergency response and community engagement, will equip personnel to handle the specific challenges faced by the island.

3. Strengthen Early Warning Systems.

The vulnerability to natural disasters necessitates robust early warning systems. Investing in modern technology, particularly in Early Warning Devices, such as automated weather stations, will improve real-time monitoring of weather patterns affecting the island.

4. Foster Community Engagement and Education.

To enhance disaster resilience, increasing community awareness is vital. Engaging local leaders will help disseminate information and motivate community participation in preparedness efforts.

Overall, enhancing the RA 10121 implementation needs to be a multidimensional effort addressing both institutional and community-level weaknesses. Improving financial management, addressing staffing and training requirements, enhancing early warning systems, and promoting active community participation are imperative steps toward creating a more responsive and resilient local disaster risk reduction system. By focusing on these priority sectors, local government units can serve better their communities and align more closely with the fundamental goals of the national DRRM policy.

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