

Early Lessons and Experiences in Building Climate-Resilient Local Health Systems in Coastal Municipalities in the Philippines

Katrina C. Ceballos, MD, MBA¹, Johannes Reiner Asio, MSc¹, Marianne K. Bongcac¹,
Naomi Beyeler, MPH, MCP², Renzo R. Guinto, MD DrPH¹

¹ Planetary and Global Health Program, St. Luke's Medical Center College of Medicine-William H. Quasha Memorial, Philippines

² University of California San Francisco Center for Climate, Health, and Equity, California, USA

BACKGROUND

- The Philippines is among the world's most vulnerable countries to climate change, experiencing wide-ranging climate-related impacts including more intense typhoons and rapid sea level rise.
- As a threat multiplier, climate change exacerbates public health problems, widens health inequities, and strains local health systems.
- Numerous global initiatives and national policy developments have been made to address climate-related health impacts.
- However, these aspirations for building climate resilience remain poorly operationalized within local health systems that are often under-resourced to implement and innovate locally-appropriate strategies for climate-health resilience.

OBJECTIVES

- This implementation project aims to pilot an innovative, municipal-level intervention to build climate-resilient local health systems in two Philippine coastal towns - Alabat and Ajuy.
- Specifically, the project aims to support municipal governments to:

- 1) Build knowledge and capacity on climate and health planning and budgeting
- 2) Provide support to apply for climate finance to fund local climate-health projects targeting community-prioritized needs
- 3) Foster collaboration within the municipality to build political and financial support for climate-health action.

ITERATIVE

NEEDS-DRIVEN

LOCALIZED

ALABAT, QUEZON

15,936 (2020 census)

Floods, poor water quality

Water-borne diseases



AJUY, ILOILO

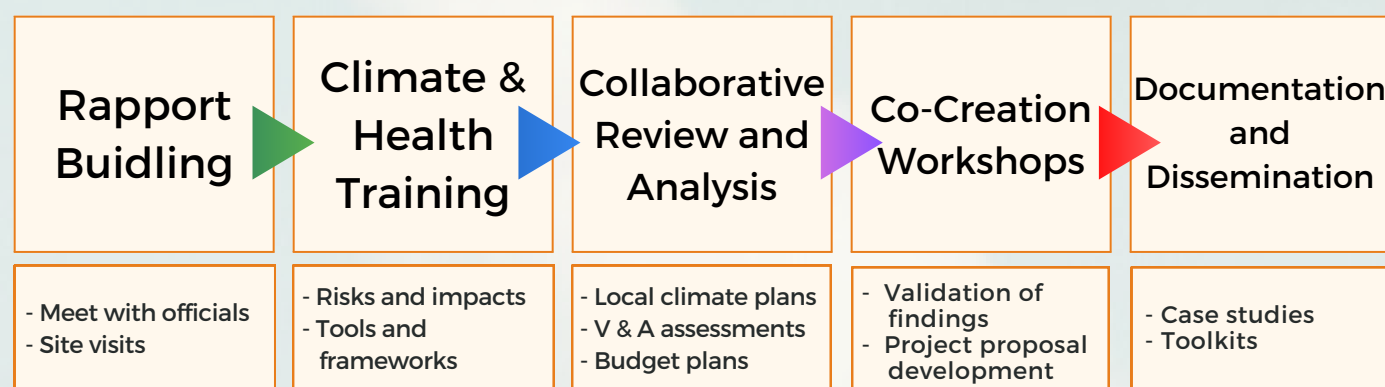
53,462 (2020 census)

Intense floods, sea level rise

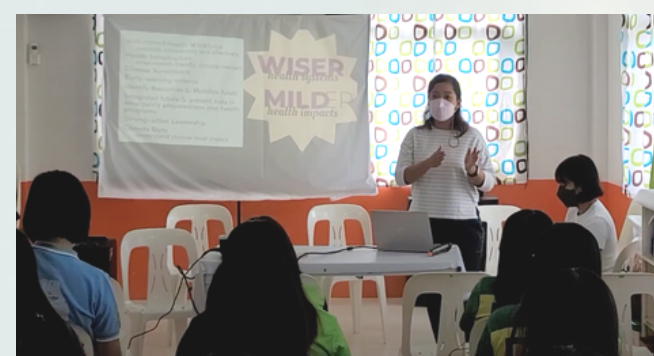
Water-borne diseases



METHODOLOGY



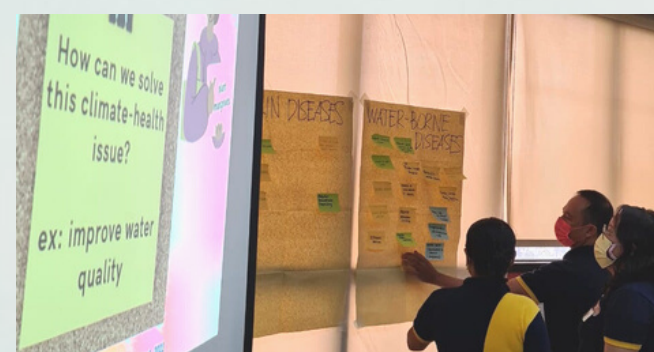
Some of the activities embedded in the intervention include:



Climate and health training for municipal staff



Contextualizing review of local climate plans with lived experiences through a public health lens



Co-designing climate-health measures, climate-considerate health budgets, and climate-health project proposals for submission to potential funders



- Research and evaluation are also embedded through pre- and post-activity surveys, key informant interviews, and analysis of secondary health and environmental data.

EARLY LESSONS AND INSIGHTS

Local Climate Change Action Plan

- Limited health sector participation
- Health section is limited and merely described the present situation
- Health interventions are not identified

Local Investment Plan for Health

- Limited input from other sectors (including environment)
- Climate and environment are mentioned in passing
- No climate lens in proposed investments

- ✓ Local governments deal with a diverse range of concerns beyond climate and health. Thus, being strategic in resilience-building initiatives is key (such as identifying focal points and champions and building on existing efforts).
- ✓ There is growing recognition of climate and health linkage, but technical capacity is very limited.
- ✓ There is limited coherence between climate planning and health planning frameworks, translating to limited intersectoral cooperation in the execution phase.
- ✓ Mainstreaming climate resilience in health systems is challenged due to COVIDization.
- ✓ But high-level buy-in (i.e., Mayor) can fuel interest and drive cooperation among local stakeholders.