**MANAGEMENT RESPONSE**

**Terminal Evaluation Review for the**

**Project Climate Twin Phoenix-Resilience and Preparedness toward Inclusive Development (PCTP-RAPID) Program**

## **Summary of Management Response**

The conduct of the independent Terminal Evaluation for the PCTP-RAPID Program was led by the United Nations Development Program Philippines, the program administrator. The Australian Embassy in the Philippines notes the review findings and recommendations put forward by the independent evaluator. Several of these were addressed during program implementation, while others will be taken on board as part of the design and implementation of a new disaster and climate resilience program. DFAT’s response to each of the recommendations is detailed below.

## **Management response to the recommendations**

| **Recommendation** | **Response** | **Explanation** | **Action Plan** | **If practical, please specify timeframe here** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. **On Project/Program Design and Policies** |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Related activities and interventions should be grouped into components rather than outputs as each component has distinct activities leading to the desired output/s. It is also better to have just few components so as not to clutter the monitoring activities and assign responsibility areas. | Agree | The program design indicated outputs and activities that were grouped by component. These activities were linked to the UNDP Country Program outcome and UNDAF outcome. | The Investment Design Document for the new climate and disaster resilience program (SHIELD Program) reflects clear outcomes, program components and activities. | Completed |
| 1. A management component is recommended with distinct responsibilities and resource allocation including M&E | Agree | The program had a management arrangement in place, which included a Program Management Board composed of senior representatives from DFAT, UNDP, the Climate Change Commission and other key Philippine national government agencies and local government units. There were technical working groups organised by component for operational and technical discussions. UNDP, as program administrator, provided program management oversight and set up a Program Management Unit for day-to-day operations, composed of a project manager and technical and administrative staff, including an M&E officer. | N/A |  |
| 1. Costs estimates and resources allocation should be scrutinized well during design stage to avoid re-allocation during implementation. Budget reallocation for funds lodged with a government agency is a time consuming process due to lengthy approval processes. | Agree | The cost estimates and resource allocation in the design were based on previous programs on disaster risk reduction implemented with UN agencies and NGOs in disaster-affected areas. The “reallocation” of budget to a government agency is part of UNDP’s National Implementation Modality (NIM) where the Climate Change Commission acted as the national executing agency for the Philippine Government, with other government agencies implementing program components. This arrangement ensured government ownership of the program. Work and financial plans were reviewed and approved annually through the Program Management Board, and budgets were released to government agencies in tranches, based on work plans and accomplishments. | N/A |  |
| 1. In designing Information Education Communication (IEC) activities for DRRCC projects, a multi-sectoral approach involving key community leaders would be more sustainable as local officials may change every three years due to scheduled elections. | Agree | The design of IEC activities for the program involved consultation with multi-sectoral stakeholders through local governments and communities. | NA |  |
| 1. As poverty reduction is an overarching concern of all development activities in the country, CCDRR projects/programs should include in its IEC component/activities resilient agricultural and fishery practices in rural areas (where majority of the poor are) and appropriate livelihood practices (handicrafts, etc.) in both rural and urban communities. | Disagree | Interventions at local and community levels should be fit for purpose. Including appropriate/resilient livelihood practices under IEC activities may not be practical/necessary unless the program is addressing specific poverty and/or socio-economic development issues. The program nonetheless included IEC activities for agricultural areas noting that the risk exposure database was initiated for households in agricultural areas. However, the program did not provide livelihood support. Livelihood assistance was provided through another program, the Philippine-Australia Community Assistance Program. | N/A |  |
| 1. **On Project/Program Implementation** |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Under NIM modality, GOP should ensure and allocate adequate resources (personnel, goods (such as office) and funds to the executing agency to ensure smooth implementation | Agree | This was addressed during implementation. The Climate Change Commission, as the national executing agency for the Philippines, provided a lead technical officer and an office space for the Program Management Unit. As mentioned under 1.c, funds were allocated to executing and responsible agencies for the implementation of program activities based on work and financial plans, with transfers triggered by accomplishments/milestones. | N/A |  |
| 1. Consultancy Arrangements - (For GOP agencies and UNDP). Instances of failures in consulting arrangements were noted in the course of program implementation. While issues were rectified through diligence, it contributed to delays in program operations. In procuring consultancy services, clear terms of reference (TOR) and diligence in background check are recommended to ensure the achievement of desired results. | Agree | This was addressed during implementation. Under UNDP’s National Implementation Modality, the procurement and financial systems of the Philippine Government were used. Given the complicated process, several delays were encountered in the program. The Australian Embassy discussed the procurement and contracting issues with UNDP and recommended a dedicated procurement person and more robust terms of references and contracts. The delays also led to the eventual shift to direct program implementation by UNDP, using its own financial, procurement and administrative systems to fast track program implementation. | N/A |  |
| 1. Better branding of the program, activities and assets financier. | Agree | The Australian Embassy discussed branding and visibility with UNDP during bilateral discussions and reported this in Partner Performance Assessment. Under UNDP’s Direct Implementation Modality, a Communications Officer was engaged. | A communications strategy and plan will be developed as part of new programs, including the SHIELD Program. A dedicated Communications Officer will also be engaged. | 2020-21 |
| 1. Better coordination of program field activities among national agencies and the PMU to ensure relevant staff can attend. | Agree | The Climate Change Commission entered into a Memorandum of Agreement, which outlined clear roles and responsibilities, with each local government partner under the program. There was an integrated work plan that aimed to synchronise activities and guide implementing partners in scheduling activities with LGUs. A cluster approach and back-to-back activities were also adopted as a way to streamline activities. Given the wide-ranging activities of the program, the multitude of partners and limited local government staff, scheduling became complicated at times. | For the SHIELD Program, a Memorandum of Understanding will be signed with each local government partner to ensure all parties agree on expectations, resources and contributions. Local activities will be driven by relevant local government staff and integrated work plans will be put in place. | 2020-21 |
| 1. Procurement and Program Fund Replenishment - Conduct procurement and financial training for relevant government staff or ensure Philippine Government provides adequate and capable procurement and financial staff to avoid delays in implementation. | Agree | The UNDP conducted training and provided coaching on its financial and procurement systems to Philippine Government staff involved in the program. The Climate Change Commission also trained administrative and financial staff to further strengthen program implementation. | NA |  |
| 1. **For future Investments** |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Going deeper into the communities - Apart from capacity building and institutionalization of DRRCC related policies, regulations and plans in the public sector, it is recommended that programs/projects should have more robust interventions and resource allocation for activities that educate/train the general public as ultimately, they are the ones who are affected by disasters and effects of CC and will be the first ones to undertake necessary measures when disasters come. | Agree in part | The program had a component on community-based disaster risk reduction and management. Interventions worked with both local governments and communities to: (a) understand local hazards, vulnerabilities and risks; (b) develop community disaster risk reduction and management and contingency plans; (c) identify key projects they could support; and (d) undertake simulation drills and exercises. | The SHIELD program intends to help local governments unlock existing public and private funding to finance programs, activities and projects that build disaster and climate resilience. | 2020-21 |
| 1. Mix of soft and capital expenditure items- In financing a project/program similar to PCTP-RAPID, allocation should be made for capital expenditure. Alternatively, programs focusing on the soft investments should seek commitment from Government to finance the infrastructure/hard investments items. | Agree in part | Australia’s development cooperation focuses on helping the Philippines deploy their own resources to greater effect through supporting policy reforms and strengthening systems and capacities. However, the program included some targeted capital investments, including the construction of a multi-purpose evacuation centre; supporting a multi-hazard early warning system; support for emergency communication equipment (i.e., two-way radios, megaphone, siren); and community-based livelihood activities. | The SHIELD program intends to help local governments unlock existing public and private funding to finance programs, activities and projects that build disaster and climate resilience. | 2020-21 |
| 1. Expanding the realm of disaster and CC resiliency - Other mitigating measures such as reforestation; rain water collection and multi-purpose water impounding systems in farms; solid waste management (especially in urban areas); and others are recommended for inclusion in DRRCC programs/projects. These may help mitigate flood and drought impacts. | Agree | The program focused on the fundamental requirements of local governments to support their recovery from disasters. As such, the program focused on helping local governments generate updated hazard and risk/vulnerability information that informed the development of risk-sensitive plans and projects (including sea walls and dikes funded by other donors), and improving the disaster preparedness of communities. | For the SHIELD Program, interventions at the local level will be based on the vulnerabilities and needs of local governments and communities to ensure these are fit-for-purpose. | 2020-21 |
| 1. Coverage of a whole province - In targeting local project areas, it is recommended that all cities and municipalities within a province are covered and not only those that were severely affected by a disaster. This approach would provide a holistic governance perspective on DRRCC; facilitate replication by province and define responsibilities at various level. | Agree in part | The program prioritised support to local governments severely affected by the disasters, and program implementation was initiated through a Memorandum of Agreement with local government units. While expanding program/project coverage to include all cities/ municipalities within a given province may seem ideal, this was not realistic given the available resources. | The SHIELD Program will be working with selected cities/municipalities in target provinces, and will engage directly with provincial governments to ensure they can share best practice and innovative approaches generated under SHIELD with other cities/municipalities within their jurisdiction. | 2020-21 |
| 1. More explicit inclusivity - In areas which have indigenous people (IPs), projects/programs should have explicit interventions for their participation. | Agree | There were no indigenous people in the areas covered by the RAPID Program. | For the SHIELD Program, a Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion adviser/specialist will be engaged to ensure the participation and inclusion of indigenous peoples and other vulnerable groups. | 2020-21 |