



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
NATIONAL DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Center, Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City, Philippines

29 MAY 2020

MEMORANDUM
No. 54, s. 2020

TO : ALL MEMBERS OF DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND MANAGEMENT COUNCILS AT THE NATIONAL, REGIONAL, PROVINCIAL, CITY AND MUNICIPAL LEVELS AND BARANGAY DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES, HEADS OF NATIONAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, PRIVATE SECTOR, NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS, AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC

SUBJECT : COVID-19 Preparedness Measures for Rainy Season

I. RATIONALE

With the on-going disaster response operations for COVID-19 pandemic, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) member agencies and partner stakeholders prepare for this year's rainy season. As a result of COVID-19, the country is facing unprecedented challenges as we respond to recurring hazards such as tropical cyclones, earthquake and volcanic eruption. COVID-19 does not stop other disasters from happening but the pandemic leads us to shift and adjust on how to prepare for them. The NDRRMC has been making efforts to not just continue regular operations for disasters but to anticipate to the appropriate preparedness measures while COVID-19 response continues.

This policy issuance is being issued to provide actionable guidance to the NDRRMC member agencies and Response Clusters, Regional, Local DRRM Councils and Barangay DRRM Committees, Non-Government Organizations, Private Sector and the general public to prepare for response operations for the rainy season in adherence to the public health measures amidst the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. This document focuses on the rainy season but can also be applied to other non-COVID-19 related incidents.

II. REFERENCES

- A. The National Disaster Response Plan (NDRP)** still serves as the national government's strategic action in providing response assistance for managing the consequences of hazards and its potential risks. The NDRP will be implemented once there are on-set and slow-onset hazards which will require management of the DRRM Councils. Meanwhile, the COVID-19 response operations is in adherence to the implementation of the National Action Plan led by the National Task Force.

- B. The Operation Listo** remain in effect as the institutionalized and standardized local protocol and platform for early preparedness, response, and monitoring actions. Activation of other DRRM tools will take effect as necessary.
- C. The DOH Guidelines on Risk Based Public Health Standards for COVID-19** Mitigation is strictly integrated in this policy as a guidance for planning on the implementation of Non-Pharmaceutical Interventions (NPIs) as minimum public health standards to mitigate the threat of COVID-19.
- D. The DBM Local Budget Circular** on Policy Guidelines on the Provision of Funds By Local Government Units For Programs, Projects, And Activities To Address The Corona Virus Disease 2019 (Covid-19) Situation is integrated to guide the LGUs in providing necessary funds for COVID-19-related programs, projects, and activities.

III. GENERAL MEASURES ON RAINY SEASON PREPAREDNESS

A. NDRRMC member Agencies and Response Clusters

The member agencies of the NDRRMC and the Response Clusters are advised to undertake the following preparedness measures:

Risk-informed decision making. The science and warning agencies shall provide scientific data on the imminent risks in the country. The DOH shall also provide data on the demographic profile of low to high risks to COVID-19 areas which will serve as a main reference for decision making.

COVID-19 Response Operations. The operationalization of the National Action Plan for COVID-19 activated the NDRRMC as the National Task Force in which the functions of the Response Clusters are harmonized to the said plan, serving as Task Groups, Sub-Task Groups and Task Units of the National Incident Command. The member agencies are advised to operate and harmonize functions in the NDRRMC Response Cluster.

Other Response Operations. In anticipation to the impacts of natural and human-induced hazards that may happen during the COVID-19 response operations, the NDRRMC will activate the NDRP aligned to the Inter-Agency Task Force for Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF- EID) Resolutions and Guidelines, and the DOH Guidelines on Risk Based Public Health Standards for COVID-19. All other regular functions of the NDRRMC during response operations will be maintained but with strict adherence to all these policy issuances.

Pre-Disaster Risk Assessment and other related meetings will be conducted through an on-line platform.

Response Clusters. The respective response clusters are advised to undertake inventory of resources including human resource, checking of vital facilities, stockpiling of food and non-food items and other essential logistical requirements in preparation for the rainy season.

Situation Reporting. The COVID-19 report shall remain under the NTF through the NIC while the national situation reports for other disasters such as for tropical cyclone, earthquake etc. shall be consolidated by the NDRRMC through the OCD.

Duty at the Emergency Operations Center. The NDRRM EOC personnel and staff will strictly observe safety and health protocols during the tour of duty. Response Cluster duty personnel will report to the NDRRM EOC as directed by the lead clusters. However, COVID-19 mitigation measures will be implemented at all times through practice of physical distancing, checking of body temperature and wearing of face masks.

B. Local Government Unit and Local DRRM Offices

To assist our Local Chief Executives, DRRM Officers and health officials, the NDRRMC reiterates the COVID-19 preparedness measures for rainy season harmonizing key concepts on the Operation Listo Manual and the DOH Guidelines on Risk Based Public Health Standards for COVID-19 Mitigation. The following are the essential guidelines for **preparedness planning of LGUs**:

Science and evidence-based decision through conduct of Pre-Disaster Risk Assessment (PDRA). The PAGASA, MGB, DOH and other warning agencies shall be consulted for the imminent risks in the LGU. Undertake the minimum measures as stated in the Oplan Listo such as activation of Emergency Operations Center, Incident Management Team, budget and logistical requirements for the response.

Vital facilities and services. The LGU is advised to anticipate and prepare for the impacts of the rainy season to vital facilities such as hospitals and clinics, local government offices, power and water services and ensure proper checking and retrofitting of facilities.

Local DRRM Funding. Through the Bayanihan to Heal As One Act, the thirty percent (30%) cap on the amount appropriated for the Quick Response Fund is lifted. LGUs are authorized to utilize the LDRRMF beyond the 30% QRF to address the disaster response requirements of the COVID-19 emergency provided that the same is consistent with the approved LDRRMF as incorporated in the Annual Investment Program. This means the LGUs are authorized to realign preparedness fund or the 70% of the Local DRRM Fund to support the programs, activities and projects for disaster response.

Logistics Requirements for rainy season. LGUs are advised to increase capability to stockpile food and non-food items for rainy season response operations.

Evacuation Planning. With the respective LGU evacuation plans, assess and review community demographics and identify areas facing low, moderate and high risk from COVID-19 and ensure observance to physical distancing (at least 1 meter apart) in evacuation centers. Provide due priority to vulnerable citizens such as elderly, pregnant women, children, persons with disabilities and individuals with underlying conditions.

Inventory of evacuation centers not listed as quarantine facilities. These facilities must be prepared in case of evacuation and must adhere to the guidelines on physical distancing to reduce transmission and contact of COVID-19.

Operations as Local Task Force COVID-19. The LDRRMCs are advised to explore incident management options suited for the on-going COVID-19 response operations and the anticipation for the rainy season.

Safety of Responders. Use of PPE and other protective apparel must be observed in the response operations to ensure safety. Other health procedures include, temperature and health screening prior to entry at all facilities or sites, wearing of face masks and cleaning and disinfection of facilities.

Social Services. Distribution of relief goods and management of evacuation centers must observe COVID-19 mitigation measures. Mass gatherings are strictly prohibited. LGUs are advised to designate distribution areas with appropriate safety markings.

C. General Public

The general public is also advised to undertake measures in preparation to the rainy season during COVID-19 response and to support the efforts of the LGU. The following are the key steps:

Monitor the news for weather updates, warning and advisories. Coordinate with local authorities for the preparedness measures for the rainy season.

Check your Go bag. Prepare for your family's go bag containing items such as food packs, clothes, whistle, flashlight, medicine, radio and etc.

Practice respiratory etiquette at all times. Use of tissue or the inner portion of the elbow to cover the nose and mouth when sneezing/ coughing. Practice proper disposal of tissue after use.

Wear Face mask. Use cloth face mask for general public and surgical mask/ medical-grade mask for individuals with flu-like symptoms and with other underlying conditions.

Practice Physical distancing with at least 1 meter apart.

Stay at home. Elderly, individuals with underlying conditions, persons with disabilities, children and pregnant women must stay at home and limit their travel. If there's a need for preemptive evacuation, limit the exposure and contact to other individuals by maintaining physical distancing and wearing of face mask. Coordinate with LGUs for proper housing in the evacuation centers.

Stockpile Relief Goods at home. Meanwhile, LGUs will designate areas for distribution of relief goods and individuals are ask to follow safety protocols set by the LGUs.

Sanitation. Conduct disinfection of frequently touched surfaces such as but not limited to tables, doorknobs, light switches, phones, toilets and among others using .5% bleach solution.

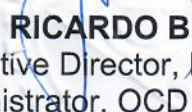
D. NGOs, CSOs, Private Sector and Other Partner Stakeholders

Partner stakeholders of the NDRRMC are encouraged to coordinate with LGUs in the repositioning of resources and other preparedness activities. The deployment of teams shall be made in accordance to the LGU incident management protocols and in adherence to public health measures.

As the country anticipates for the rainy season, NDRRMC's main priorities are to ensure life safety, to provide life sustainment to emergencies and incidents, and to continue the delivery of government services amidst the complex disasters. The NDRRMC enjoins the LGU, DRRM Officers, health officials, Private Sector, NGOs, CSOs and the general public to continue with our disaster preparedness measures for rainy season while embracing the new normal brought by the COVID-19 pandemic. The rainy season preparedness efforts are adjusted as we practice physical distancing and wearing of face masks to reduce contact and exposure to individuals. The NDRRMC will continue to operate with a whole-of-society-approach for disaster preparedness and response to the highest level possible.

For information and guidance.

For the Chairperson, NDRRMC:


USEC RICARDO B. JALAD
Executive Director, NDRRMC and
Administrator, OCD