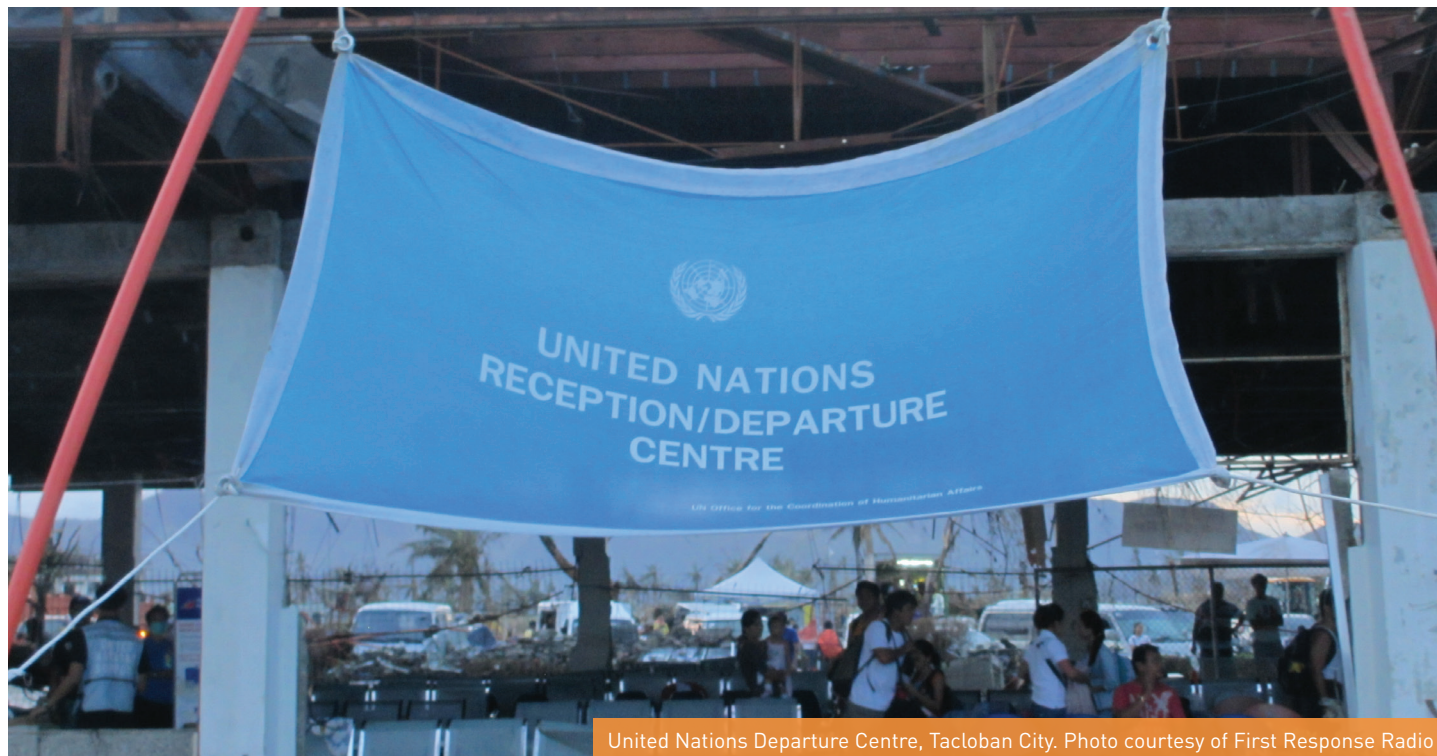


CDAC NETWORK TYPHOON HAIYAN LEARNING REVIEW CASE STUDY: CONSOLIDATING COMMUNITY FEEDBACK THROUGH CWC AND AAP TECHNICAL WORKING GROUPS IN THE PHILIPPINES NOVEMBER 2014



This case study was written as part of the CDAC Network Typhoon Haiyan Learning Review¹, which examines communication with communities (CwC) initiatives and coordination of CwC during the response to Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines in November 2013.

BACKGROUND

The response to Typhoon Haiyan was unique for OCHA² (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs), as it was the first time both Communicating with Communities (CwC) staff and Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) advisors were deployed to support coordination efforts.

The aim of producing this case study is to capture the good practice, gaps and suggestions for improvements in the coordination and operation of CwC and AAP programming, at both an operational and strategic level. It examines how the cross cutting areas of CwC and AAP worked together through working groups throughout the response, and focuses on one of the key collaborative initiatives which was developed for the first time in the Philippines: the consolidated 'Community Feedback Form' (CFF).

AAP AND CWC: WORKING TOGETHER IN PRACTICE

A CwC Technical Working Group was set up in Tacloban on 24 November 2014, by OCHA CwC staff, and co-chaired with the

Philippine Information Agency (PIA)³, and later by World Vision International.⁴ This was followed by an AAP Technical Working Group set up by the OCHA AAP Advisor in February 2014. These groups operated as part of the humanitarian cluster system, and held a seat at the Interagency Cluster Coordination meeting. They were attended by representatives of local and international NGOs, UN agencies, local government and in the case of the CwC Working Group, media development agencies and local media. Members of the Technical Working Group focused their efforts on a combination of technical advice to clusters and agencies, as well as support and implementation of CwC operational activities.

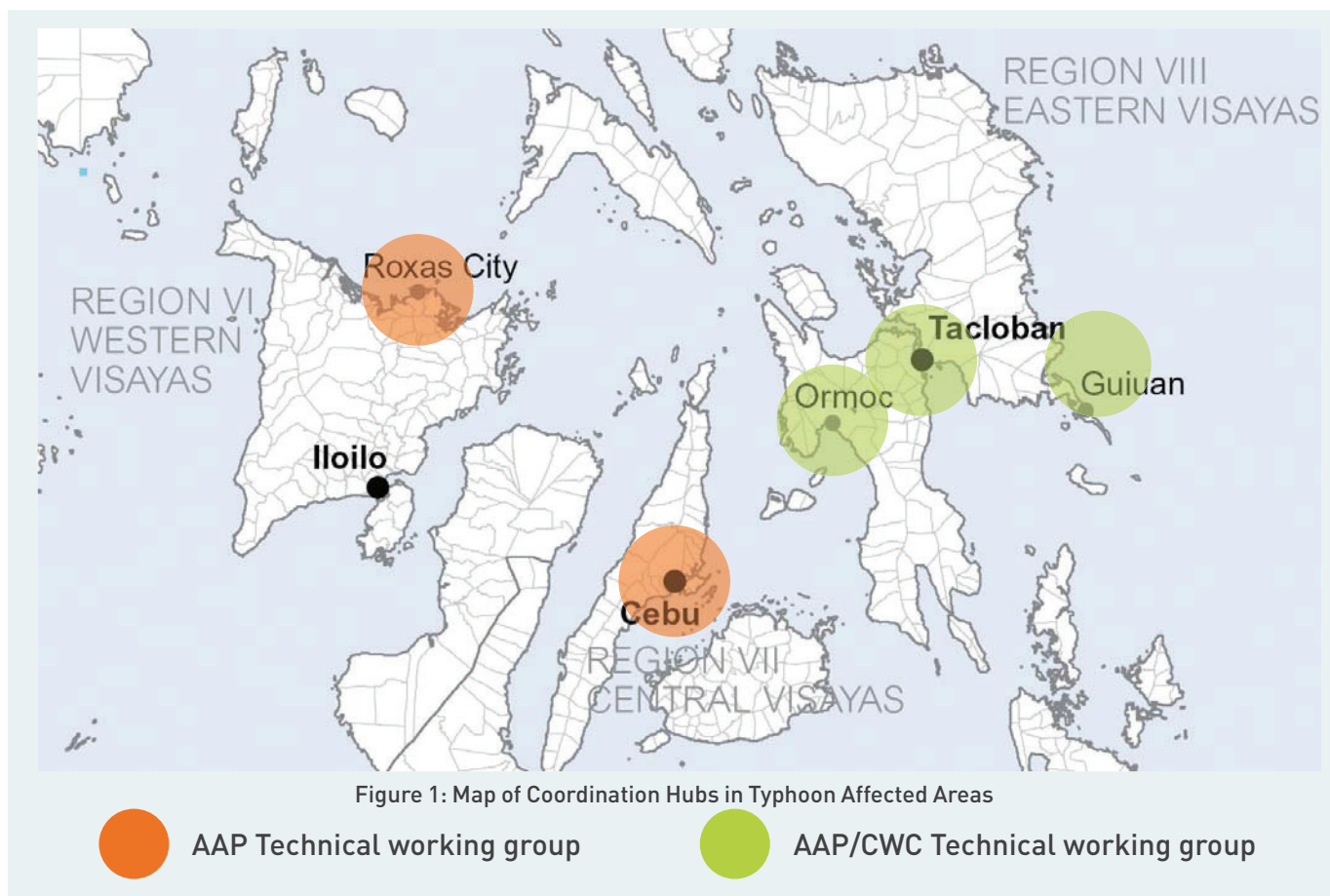
Similar technical working groups were set up in each of the humanitarian operational hubs (see Figure 1). In both Tacloban and Guiuan, AAP and CwC Technical Working Groups officially merged into AAP/CwC Working Groups in May 2014, as staff recognised the synergies between the two areas of work and acknowledged that agencies rarely had staff dedicated to both CwC and AAP, so it was often the same staff attending both meetings. The operational hub in Ormoc established a joint AAP and CwC Technical Working group in June 2014. In Region VI (Panay Island) and Cebu, AAP Technical Working Groups were set up in May 2014. These never became joint working groups as there were no dedicated CwC staff in OCHA or participating agencies, and no media development partners operating in either area. The general practice in these dedicated AAP groups was to make CwC a standing item on meeting agendas.

1 CDAC Network Typhoon Haiyan Learning Review, 2014. Access at : www.cdacnetwork.org

2 www.unocha.org

3 www.pia.gov.ph/

4 www.wvi.org



COMPLEMENTARITY AND COLLABORATIVE INITIATIVES

Having dedicated staff focusing on both CwC and AAP at coordination level clearly resulted in a stronger focus within the humanitarian response on soliciting and listening to community feedback, and attempting to meet communities' information needs. However, the creation of separate CwC and AAP Technical Working Groups and roles created unnecessary silos. In practice, there was significant overlap between CwC and AAP Technical Working Groups, leading to some confusion over their respective remits.

Various documents were produced throughout the response, explaining how AAP and CwC approaches complement each other, and where they overlap. The CDAC Network also researched a working paper that has recently been published.⁵ Members of AAP and CwC Technical Working Groups that were interviewed as part of the CDAC Network Learning Review identified complementarity on areas of transparency, information provision, participation and community feedback and complaints.

Integration between AAP and CwC staff, and how closely the two areas worked together varied throughout the response. During the initial weeks there was high integration between OCHA's AAP and CwC staff, resulting in a number of joint initiatives which helped identify community information and communication needs for the whole humanitarian response. This included the development of the Rapid Information Communication and Accountability Assessment (RICAA) questions, which agencies in the working groups were encouraged to include in their agency assessments, and share

data on information needs and preferred community channels with the wider humanitarian system. Joint community consultations carried out by AAP and CwC staff resulted in circulation of AAP and CwC issues papers, including actions and suggestions for clusters.⁶

⁶ OCHA & PIA, Affected Community Consultation no 1, 27-29 Nov 2013; OCHA AAP and CwC issues paper, Haiyan response: actions for clusters, 11 December 2013

'Taken together, AAP and CwC create a much richer and complete picture of information, two-way communication and the differential needs of the communities, with CwC providing far greater technical expertise and depth on the subject matter, and AAP providing a stronger and broader social and rights-based framework within which to locate and guide the work.'

What is the difference between CwC and AAP, April 2014, OCHA

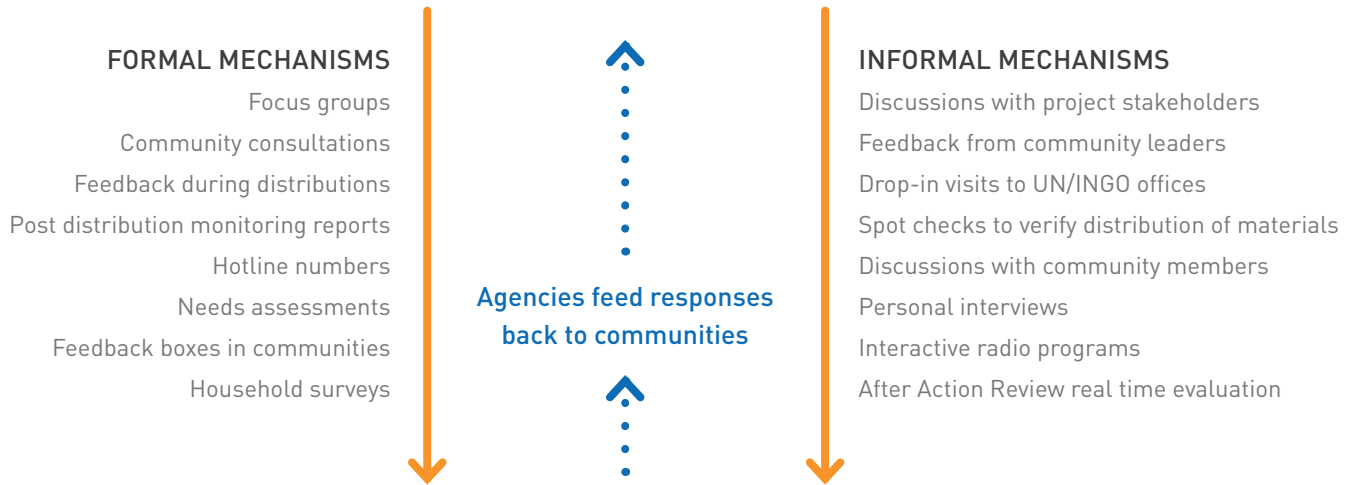
⁵ CDAC Network, Working Paper Communicating with Communities and Accountability, November 2014. Available at: <http://bit.ly/1sw56zL>

CFF TACLOBAN PROCESS

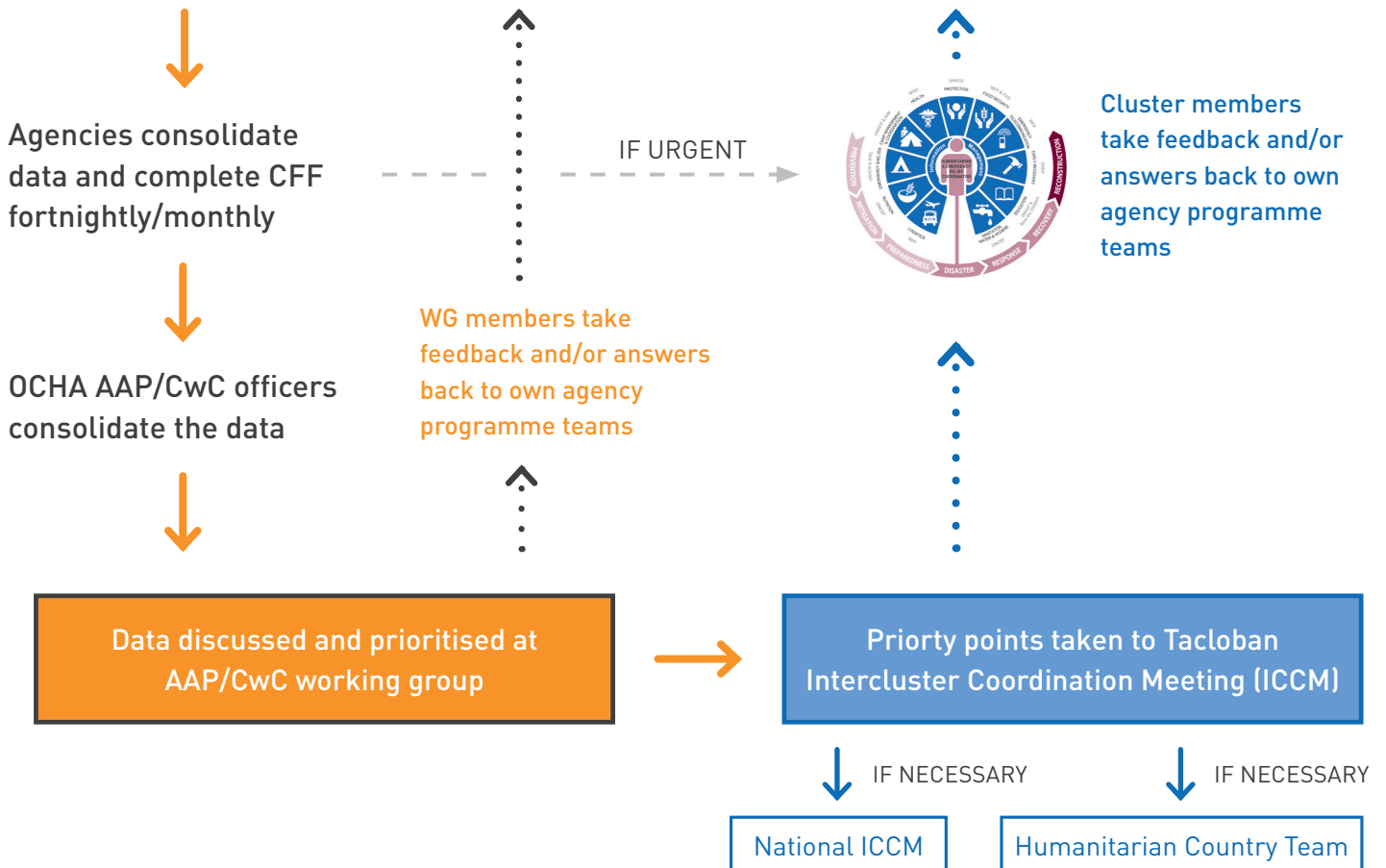
Figure 2: The Consolidated Community Feedback Form (CFF) Process in Tacloban



COMMUNITIES GIVE FEEDBACK TO AGENCIES



HUMANITARIAN AGENCIES



CONSOLIDATING COMMUNITY FEEDBACK ACROSS THE RESPONSE

The AAP/CwC Technical Working Groups conducted a series of collaborative community consultations: during May and June 2014 over 25 focus group discussions and key informant interviews were undertaken across the typhoon-affected area.⁷ Although frequently discussed, attempts to set up common service hotlines and other common feedback mechanisms in the early stages of the response had not been successful. This was due to planned 'common service' initiatives not being funded, and individual agencies wanting to handle feedback aimed at their agency, rather than rely on others to refer feedback.

In March 2014, the CwC/AAP Technical Working Groups developed the 'Community Feedback Form' (CFF) in an attempt to systematically consolidate community feedback being collected by different agencies. Once community feedback was consolidated, it could be more effectively communicated to decision makers in order to effect necessary changes in aid delivery and programming. The Consolidated CFF and process was developed for the first time during the response to Typhoon Haiyan, and is therefore explored further in this case study.

WHAT DOES THE CONSOLIDATED COMMUNITY FEEDBACK FORM (CFF) PROCESS INVOLVE?

The CFF asks agencies about the priority issues and concerns being raised by communities, where, and how frequently. It also provides space to note any recommendations coming from communities on how to address the issues. It asks whether these are new issues or ongoing trends; the mechanism through which these issues were brought to the attention of the agency (i.e. feedback box, post-distribution monitoring visit); and asks for any quotes or examples. See Annex 1 for a copy of the latest iteration of the form.

7 OCHA, CwC Eight Months of Haiyan Report, 2014 (Internal document).

'Prior to the CFF, pockets of success on two-way communication existed, but a systematic way of gathering and processing the information to communicate it to decision-makers in both government and aid organisations was found wanting'

OCHA AAP Officer, Tacloban
April 2014, OCHA

The process worked as follows (see Figure 2). In Tacloban, Ormoc and Roxas, Members of the AAP/CwC Technical Working Groups collect and consolidate community feedback within their own agencies, using their standard agency feedback mechanisms (examples listed in Figure 2). They then complete the CFF with community feedback from their geographical area, and submit the form to the AAP/CwC Technical Working Group (either fortnightly or monthly depending on the group). OCHA AAP and/or CwC staff analyse and consolidate the CFF data and present it to the working group.⁸ Issues requiring cluster-level response are prioritised according to frequency and urgency. The top issues are reported at regional Inter Cluster Coordination Meetings, where clusters will respond directly, or take issues back to their cluster and respond or report back at a later date. Information will also be presented at National Inter Cluster Coordination Meetings and to the Humanitarian Country Team if necessary. CwC/AAP Working Group members will report any data from the CFF to relevant operational managers within their own agency, and communicate agency and cluster responses back to communities who raised the issues.

WHO PARTICIPATED?

Participation in the AAP/CwC Working Groups by different agencies varied over time, depending on staff capacity and mandate. Submitting data for the CFF depended on agencies' capacity and resources to collect and consolidate community feedback within their own organisations, as well as their protocols on sharing data with other agencies. Smaller NGOs with limited capacity did not have enough staff to consolidate data or attend AAP/CwC Technical Working Group meetings, so it was more difficult to participate. Agencies focused on health and/or protection issues found it was more difficult to share feedback through the CFF, due to the sensitive nature of their data.

In Tacloban, Radyo Abante (a collaborative humanitarian radio project supported by PECOJON, World Vision International, UNFPA, First Response Radio and Internews⁹) participated in the CwC/AAP Working Group and contributed to the CFF based on listener feedback. In Tacloban and Roxas, IOM also contributed feedback from listeners of its radio show.

WHAT HAS WORKED WELL AND ADDED VALUE?

The perception amongst AAP/CwC Technical Working Group participants was that although it was challenging to collect this data initially, agency staff saw the value as time went on:

'Rather than the challenges, we've seen the value of listening to people and information sharing' (INGO Programme Manager, Roxas).

Previously organisations had been sharing feedback in other cluster meetings, but there was a sense that with the CFF mechanism

8 Draft AAP-PSEA Report, OCHA, 2014 (Internal document).

9 CDAC Network Case Study: Radyo Abante – A Collaborative Commitment to Accountability and Humanitarian Broadcasting, 2014. Available at www.cdacnetwork.org

'feedback is consolidated, more in depth, has greater coverage, and is less biased' (INGO Accountability Coordinator, Roxas). Participants perceive the CFF has added value to the response through:

1. Highlighting issues which arise about their own agencies work, so they can respond and improve their programme. 'The CFF is a good thing because we really gather what the community wanted to talk about and we will know if our response to the community is adequately responded to. Otherwise the same issues keep coming up' INGO Staff, Tacloban
2. Ensuring priority community feedback reaches decision makers and is therefore acted upon 'The CwC Group is a good venue to discuss feedback and push it through the clusters, so it gets into higher level discussions where persons with authority will really influence decisions' INGO Staff, Tacloban.
3. Highlighting what information communities are lacking, which the sector should then collaborate to provide. 'I run my radio programmes based on the CFF so I know what issues people are asking questions about' INGO Staff, Roxas City.

A number of examples were given of where community feedback channelled through the CFF has resulted in high level programmatic change.

'An example is the feedback on hampered access to health services and facilities in barangay health units due to transportation costs which was elevated to the health cluster. The latter, led by WHO, then made a recommendation for community-based health services through medical missions for a more inclusive and effective health intervention, which was consequently advocated for by their cluster members'

UN Staff Member, Tacloban

'It's challenging to get consolidated feedback from all areas as some of the organisations don't have strong mechanisms to collect feedback, or dedicated accountability staff'

Learning Workshop participant

'One of the top community feedbacks gathered for the month of May was 'assessment and community consultation fatigue. Thereafter, Protection, Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM), and other interested cluster members coordinated their community consultations and focus group discussions to minimize duplication of efforts. The input of the AAP/CwC WG in putting forth the top issue of survey/assessment/consultation fatigue to the inter cluster coordination meeting, therefore, led to a more coordinated community consultation, survey, and discussions'

UN Staff, Tacloban

WHAT HAVE BEEN THE CHALLENGES, WHERE AND WHY?

Five main challenges with the CFF process were highlighted:

1. The capacity of responding organisations to contribute data to the process.

Time, staff capacity and resources were noted as barriers to contributing to the CFF, particularly for smaller NGOs and media partners, who did not have dedicated staff who could collect and consolidate community feedback. Some participants saw the CFF as 'too complex' and 'an administrative burden', particularly if their agency feedback mechanism and process was not well aligned with the CFF process and timelines.

In Roxas, participants in the AAP Technical Working Group experienced challenges in regularly contributing to the CFF due to a lack of staff and resources, despite them seeing the value of the process. 'In Tacloban they are doing the CFF, but here in Region VI we want to but we don't have the capacity' INGO Staff Member, Roxas.

2. Need for a faster mechanism to ensure feedback reaches the right agency

Some colleagues from Radyo Abante felt the CFF process was sometimes 'too bureaucratic and process orientated', and they needed more efficient feedback system so that feedback reached humanitarian agencies, and was responded too, more quickly. Requests for an overarching 'humanitarian' feedback system came also from local NGOs and government actors.

3. Closing the feedback loop for participating agencies and communities

There was a lack of consistent feedback from clusters and other agencies on what happened to the data submitted for the CFF, leading to some participants questioning the value of contributing. Participants felt that there could be a benefit to holding preparedness activities with clusters on the CFF, to ensure they understood the process and could align their decision making processes according to consolidated community feedback.

'There is a need for clearer pathways for sharing and following up on feedback for other agencies – we need to close the feedback loop and tell communities what we are doing with their feedback.'

We can't ensure feedback has been acted upon if it's not by our agency. And not following up is a reputational risk to the whole humanitarian sector' Learning Workshop participant.

4. Issues of validation, privacy and confidentiality of data

Sharing confidential data from community members was raised as a concern, particularly in relation to media actors being involved in AAP/CwC Technical Working Groups and fear of escalation of these issues in local media. Questions were also raised around different agencies' processes of validating community feedback before including them in the CFF. 'Issues of privacy and confidentiality of data in collecting feedback need to be worked through in the forthcoming common services project' Learning Workshop Participant.

5. Need for greater data disaggregation (gender, age and ethnicity)

This will ensure feedback is appropriately responded to, and information is being communicated to the right people in the right way.

HOW COULD IT BE IMPROVED NEXT TIME?

A number of suggestions were given of how the CFF process could be improved.

1. Community visits should be coordinated between humanitarian responders, and the potential for joint and complementary feedback mechanisms should be considered: 'If we ask too often it loses value in the end. We need to synchronise our schedules and visit communities together. In areas where there are a lot of NGOs it would be best to have one joint mechanism' Learning Workshop Participant.
2. Preparedness activities with clusters and agencies should be undertaken and monitoring frameworks developed,

to make the consolidation process worthwhile: 'Currently there is no tracking of how clusters respond to that information, and no feedback to communities on how their feedback was acted upon. That needs to change' Learning Workshop Participant.

3. Bigger agencies could support agencies with less capacity, to make sure feedback from their service users is not missed. This could include supporting with data analysis and consolidation.

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

The DFID-funded 'Accountability Common Service Project' has just begun in the Philippines, which will investigate practical ways to improve accountability and quality collaboratively across the humanitarian sector. The project is being led by Plan International, IOM and World Vision International. The project, which it was hoped would be funded during the emergency phase of the response, plans to test different collaborative feedback platforms, and develop recommendations for the Philippines based on community opinions.¹⁰ OCHA will continue to trial using the CFF in different contexts where it has capacity, and encouraging its use at an earlier stage of the response.

'There is a need for a common referral system or directory, so all actors (media, humanitarian, and government) can refer community questions on and get answers for communities quickly.'

Reporter, Radyo Abante

10 Common Accountability Services Project, Plan, IOM, World Vision International, 2014.

Community Feedback Form: Region VIII

We are seeking information from agencies working with communities in Region VIII affected by Typhoon Yolanda. This information will be compiled and shared with Clusters, the Government, and other coordination bodies to help make sure that community concerns and perspectives are heard in decision making. Please complete the information below (no page limit). You can include references/links to reports and other resources if you'd like to share more detailed information.

Organization Name:

Completed by:

Period covered:

- 1. What are the priority issues and concerns being raised by communities? Please be specific to Municipality and Barangay Level. Please indicate high frequency issues and provide detail. (More key issues may be added)**

KEY ISSUES	Community Recommendation	FREQUENCY	TRENDS
<i>Ex. Beneficiary selection is not fair</i>	<i>Ex. Selection committee composed of affected community leaders</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low	<input type="checkbox"/> New <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On-going
Municipality: <i>Tacloban City</i> Barangay: <i>88, San Jose</i>			
1.		<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low	<input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> On-going
Municipality: Barangay:			
2.		<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low	<input type="checkbox"/> Ne <input type="checkbox"/> On-going
Municipality: Barangay:			
3.		<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low	<input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> On-going
Municipality: Barangay:			

4.		<input type="radio"/> High <input type="radio"/> Medium <input type="radio"/> Low	<input type="radio"/> New <input type="radio"/> On-going
Municipality: Barangay:			
5.		<input type="radio"/> High <input type="radio"/> Medium <input type="radio"/> Low	<input type="radio"/> New <input type="radio"/> On-going
Municipality: Barangay:			

2. **How have these issues been brought to the attention of your agency? Briefly describe community consultation/feedback mechanisms that you have used.** (*ex: hotlines, suggestion boxes, focus group discussions, SMS, social media, etc.*)

3. **Can you share any quotes/examples that illustrate these issues in people’s own words? If possible indicate the sex, age, location and any vulnerability factors for persons quoted. *Optional.*** (Quotes will be used publicly so please get appropriate approvals especially the names of respondents.)

Age:	Sex:	Location:	Vulnerability:
Quote:			

4. **Any other issues (questions raised, unmet needs, concerns).**

Please send form to [OCHA AAP Officer and CwC Officer] by end of day [insert date]. Submissions arriving later than this will be integrated into the next CFF one month later.