

FORUM OF THE FRAMEWORK-BUILDING FOR INVESTIGATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT SETTLEMENT PLANNING RESPONSES TO DISASTER MITIGATION PROJECT

January 2007

Four speakers invited by ALTERPLAN were invited at this forum addressed to LGU officials and NGO members. The project aims to eventually build a theoretical framework for the investigation of settlement planning measures by local governments that address the occurrence of "natural disasters" resulting in great loss of life. The project springs from ALTERPLAN's interest in the livability of settlements, which should include a reasonable degree of safety from naturally occurring phenomena such as landslides, flooding, earthquakes, and volcanic activities.

The project is focusing this proposal on local governments and their primary role, among the levels and units of government, to shape the physical development of their territories. The project seeks to make an initial investigation of how local governments are able or not able to make use of planning and development information and technology to protect their constituents from naturally occurring phenomena.

Several papers were presented during the forum to explore various aspects of the above topic. Invited speakers were M. Aurelio from the Mines and Geosciences Bureau; Dr. Marqueza L. Reyes from the Department of Geography of the University of the Philippines; Professor Ernesto M. Serote from the School of Urban and Regional Planning of the University of the Philippines; and, Dr. Emmanuel M. Luna, Managing Director of the Center for Disaster Preparedness Foundation and professor at the University of the Philippines.

The audience numbered around fifty, and was made up mostly of NGO and NGO network representatives, but were also invited representatives of NCR city governments and LGU networks such as the League of Cities or the League of Municipalities.

The NGO network that sponsored this forum, the Partnership for Philippine Support Service Agencies (PHILSSA), wishes to see its NGO members cooperating with local governments in long-term settlements planning strategies that would contribute to disaster mitigation. These strategies may be in the form of legislation, analytical techniques or community responses. We hope that this forum stimulates more action in this area in the NGO community.