Faith and Resilience after Disaster

The Case of Typhoon Haiyan

November 2015

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Front Cover Photo

In this barangay in Marabut, Samar (The Philippines), the original chapel (seen in the photo) was so heavily damaged by Typhoon Haiyan that it could no longer be used. While efforts are on-going to raise funds for the rehabilitation of this chapel, a temporary chapel has been constructed in front of it. Photo by author, March 2015.

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List of abbreviations

DFID   UK Department for International Development
DSWD   Philippines Department of Social Welfare and Development
FBO   Faith Based Organisation
IASC   Inter-Agency Standing Committee
(I)NGO   (International) Non-governmental Organisation
UNISDR   United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

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Executive Summary

While international actors increasingly focus on building people's resilience to disaster, the role of cultural and spiritual capital in resilience is seldom mentioned. As faith is an important component of most people's lives, this aspect is sorely missing from the debate. While acknowledging that some issues associated with faith, such as maintenance of the status quo, may negatively impact resilience, this report explores aspects of a faith-based approach to development that contribute to building resilience in the aftermath of disasters.

The report explores the role of faith in building resilience in the context of the response to Super Typhoon Haiyan (known locally as Yolanda), which made landfall in the Philippines on 8 November 2013, affecting 14 million people, including over 6000 deaths and over 4 million displaced. The report is concerned with the experiences and perspectives of populations affected by the typhoon. The research findings reveal differences in local people's perceptions of different types of humanitarian organisations. They also reveal some key learning from the faith-based approach to humanitarian relief that could enhance intervention methodologies of secular organisations working in post-disaster settings, particularly those working in contexts with largely religious populations.

The results are based on primary research conducted with affected populations in the Philippines and cover three areas. Firstly, they report the areas of assistance that research participants from affected populations identified as important for their resilience ("Activities that have added most to resilience"). This includes a range of assistance from immediate relief, such as food packs, to longer-term activities like shelter construction. The next section deals with the specific role of faith in building personal, family and community resilience following the typhoon ("The role of faith in resilience to typhoons"). The final section then investigates how organisations responding to the disaster impact resilience, particularly regarding how faith affects perceptions of different organisations ("Perceptions of faith-based assistance for resilience to typhoons").

Results show that people's faith can be inextricably woven into their perceptions of resilience. The report focuses only on the Filipino case following Typhoon Haiyan. Its relevance, however, is broadened by discussion of the delineation between faith-based and secular humanitarianism and by the challenge it poses to a narrow, purely technological view of resilience. Resilience is not limited to material, technological and economic concerns, but also includes cultural and faith-based components. If organisations want resilience programmes to be truly relevant and appropriate to the local context, these issues should be taken into account. The main findings from each section are as follows:

Activities that have added most to resilience
This section outlines those aspects of assistance received from external sources that local people felt were most important for their resilience. It allows a picture to emerge of where activities linked to faith might be placed in relation to other activities. When referring to the actual assistance they received following the typhoon, research participants noted that shelter and cash interventions were most important for their resilience. Yet, when speaking more hypothetically about what would be most important for their resilience, cash diminished in importance and participants prioritised shelter and livelihood activities. Activities connected to faith (e.g. chapel reconstruction, spiritual formation through prayers, blessings, catechism, etc.) were mentioned as important interventions but they were not of primary importance when compared to the consensus that emerged around shelter assistance.

Lessons Learned from the Response to Typhoon Haiyan
- External actors most concretely improved resilience through shelter assistance.

- Immaterial activities such as spiritual formation were also judged as highly important, but these were not particularly seen as part of external assistance.

Recommendations

- Resilience should be defined and understood through a broad perspective that includes material assistance and immaterial support. (The ways in which NGOs can provide immaterial support are noted in the final section.)

The role of faith in resilience to typhoons

Participants said that their faith is important for personal, familial, and community strength in the face of disaster. This strength allows them to be resilient. Their faith helps them to give meaning to the event, gives them a good attitude so that they can act responsibly following the disaster and encourages them to serve other people in their community. Religious involvement had also been important for participants to increase their knowledge of hazards. Material aspects, such as the chapel building, were noted as important for building social capital when used in community events. The predominant focus, however, was on resilience being more than just material and that faith helped with such personal and psychological aspects of resilience.

Lessons Learned

- Faith supported resilience in two main ways: a) personal strength and support from prayer and b) community strength and support from committed citizens serving each other.
- People's resilience was imagined in many ways that were not only linked to the material, but also resonated with the spiritual (understandings of the divine in disaster), psychological (feeling strong and not losing sense of oneself), and intellectual (increasing knowledge of hazards).
- Far from provoking a sense of fatalism, faith institutions and ideas can help provide people with a sense of agency that that can address risk in the face of future hazards.

Recommendations

- Include immaterial and cultural elements, such as knowledge sharing through faith networks and serving others in the community as inspired by faith, in notions of disaster resilience.
- Work with faith communities to instil local populations with a sense of agency and harness their ability to reduce risk.

Perceptions of faith-based assistance for resilience to typhoons

This section focuses attention on the role of external organisations in helping build resilience. The participants in these focus groups were positive towards faith-based organisations. Although this may be expected from such a highly religious population, lessons learned regarding participants' perceptions of "faith-based" organisations and how particular aspects of a faith-based approach can improve resilience are relevant to all types of organisation. Research participants took a functional approach to labelling faith-based organisations (FBOs) based on their activities, not their mandates. As a result non-FBOs may be considered "faithful" if they abide by certain characteristics. When asked what characterised a faith-based organisation, participants focused on four main points: their trustworthiness, their holistic approach, their long-term commitment and the prayers and rituals they perform.

It is understandable that prayers might be a characteristic of FBOs, but the other three areas require further explanation. The holistic approach was the most referenced across all focus groups. It refers to the idea that human interaction is important in assistance and helps people feel stronger psychologically as well as gaining physical strength through the provision of relief goods. Participants greatly appreciated encouragement that boosted morale, which they deemed to be part of the faith-based approach. This was a key element of what organisations can do for affected populations to aid personal resilience. Trustworthiness was also a central aspect. Participants were highly aware and critical of the potential for corruption in the delivery of assistance. Corruption

took away from a sense of resilience as people saw themselves at the bottom of the food chain. Trustworthiness was therefore a key sign of a good or "faithful" organisation. Finally, the longer-term approach of some FBOs, particularly missionary organisations, was appreciated as it showed a long-term commitment to building community resilience into the future.

Lessons Learned
- Human interaction and a holistic approach were highly appreciated for improving personal resilience.
- Methods of delivering aid and interactions with populations are important, not just the outputs of aid delivery.
- Power, inequality and dehumanisation are key factors local populations view as negatively affecting their resilience. They saw the lack of human interaction from some relief agencies as perpetuating these negatives.

Recommendations
- Organisations should work to support holistic measures for interaction with affected populations.
- Organisations should be aware of their social position within the populations that they serve and that service delivery without a human face can negatively impact personal and psychological resilience.

This report demonstrates the importance of faith within the context of resilience. The report makes clear that faith cuts across all areas of concern for organisations seeking to build resilience following disaster. It also shows that faith is used as a signifier of organisational identity for affected populations. However, this does not necessarily limit secular organisations. Lessons about delivery of humanitarian assistance in a principled, humanistic and holistic manner are crucial for all. Current approaches toward localising disaster risk reduction, bottom up mechanisms and systems of accountability need to be strengthened to include this more holistic approach. Engaging local level actors for top-down interventions will not rectify this; communities must be approached with true cultural sensitivity so as not to damage existing resilience and to help further build capacities.

Introduction

This report focuses on the role of faith in resilience in the context of the response to Super Typhoon Haiyan (known locally as Yolanda) in the Philippines. Misean Cara[1] has recently identified resilience as a key research interest for the organisation. Resilience "is the ability of countries, communities and households to manage change, by maintaining or transforming living standards in the face of shocks or stresses - such as earthquakes, drought or violent conflict - without compromising their long-term prospects."[2] The research was initiated by Misean Cara to understand the role of faith in building post-disaster resilience and how this affected beneficiary perceptions of the assistance they received following Typhoon Haiyan. Drawing from consultation between Misean Cara and the researcher, as well as a review of the relevant reports and literature, three main research questions were developed:

1. In the opinion of the affected communities, which activities do they think have added most to their resilience?
2. How do affected populations characterise the role of faith in their resilience to typhoons?
3. Do beneficiaries perceive value to faith-based humanitarian assistance for their resilience?

The specific focus of the research is the experience of affected populations. It aims to present the perspectives of those who have received assistance from a range of humanitarian actors, both secular and faith-based. It does not aim to evaluate Misean Cara programmes or to give a comprehensive view of resilience in the chosen communities *per se*. Instead it focuses specifically on the role of faith in people's experience of disaster and recovery and how this affects future resilience.

Background

Emergency Context

Haiyan made landfall on the eastern seaboard of the Philippines in the early hours of 8 November 2013. With sustained wind speeds of 235km/h and gusts of up to 275km/h[3], it brought deadly storm surges to coastal areas and quickly wrought devastation across the Visayan region (Regions VI, VII, and VIII of the Philippines). 14 million people were affected, 4 million were displaced and over 6,000 were killed.[4] It prompted immediate response from government and local and international humanitarian organisations. The total humanitarian funding, as recorded by UNOCHA's Financial Tracking Service, was USD $843 million.[5] The path of Haiyan can be seen in Figure 1 and demonstrates its track across the Visayan region (central region) of the Philippines. Haiyan was record-breaking in its intensity and the severity of its effects, particularly the storm surges experienced in Leyte.[6]

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[1] Misean Cara is an organisation inspired by faith that supports the work of its 89 religious and lay missionary member organisations around the world.

[2] DFID, "Defining Disaster Resilience," 6.

[3] OCHA, "Typhoon Haiyan Sit Rep No. 2."

[4] OCHA, "Typhoon Haiyan Sit Rep No. 22."

[5] UN OCHA FTS, Philippines: Typhoon Haiyan – November 2013 https://fts.unocha.org/pageloader.aspx?page=emerg-emergencyDetails&appealID=1043. Accessed 9 June 2015.

[6] Hanley et al., "IASC Typhoon Haiyan Evaluation," 18; Ocon and Neussner, "Assessing Early Warning Efforts for Typhoon Haiyan in Leyte."
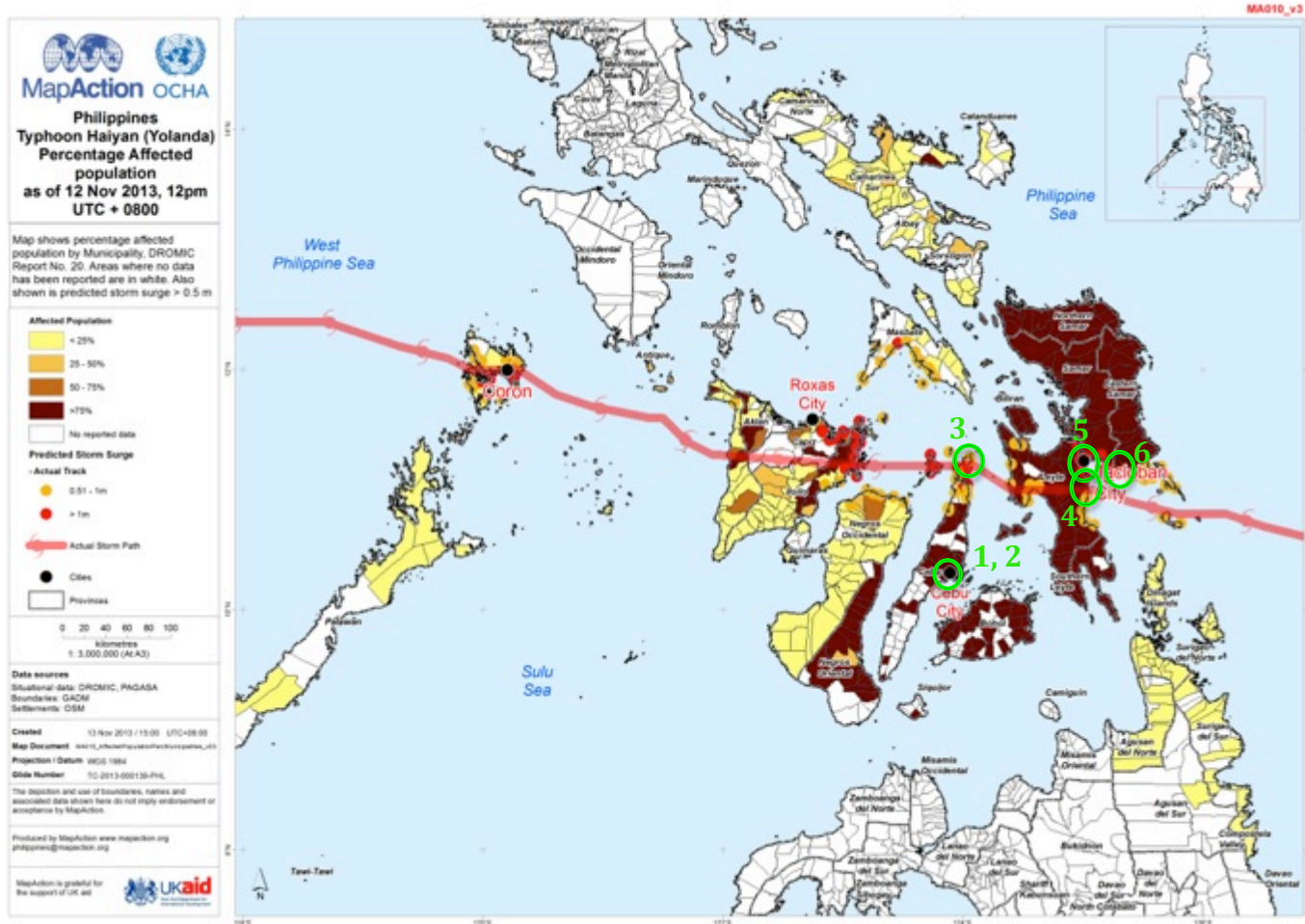
Figure 1: The path of Typhoon Haiyan. The areas visited are circled in green. Source: MapAction, 14 Nov 2013

The research was conducted in six areas:

1. Minglanilla, Cebu
2. Cebu City
3. Northern Cebu
4. Tanauan, Leyte
5. Tacloban, Leyte
6. Marabut, Samar

Minglanilla, Cebu City, and Tacloban represent largely urban contexts. Livelihoods are diversified between fishing, small businesses such as food production and selling, and other activities, with levels of unemployment high, especially in the bigger cities like Cebu. Northern Cebu, Tanauan, and Marabut represent more rural areas. The primary livelihoods in these areas are agriculture and fishing. The areas in Minglanilla were least affected. Populations evacuated from their homes but, by and large, there was no substantial damage to shelter or infrastructure. The area studied in Cebu City had been affected by fires, an earthquake in October 2013 and Haiyan in November 2013. The accumulation of damage and trauma from these events meant that, even though Haiyan was not particularly impactful in this area, existing vulnerabilities were already heightened from previous shocks. The area in Northern Cebu, Tanauan, Tacloban, and Marabut were directly under the path of the typhoon and were most severely affected. There had been total

or partial damage to most homes and loss of livelihood due to the destruction of coconut trees and other crops. There was some variation between these areas as, usually depending on their proximity to the coast and deadly storm surges, some barangays[7] suffered greater loss of life and destruction than others.

Some barangays, particularly in Tacloban and Marabut, had since been classed as 'No Build Zones'. This put residents in a position of limbo while they lived in bunkhouses or temporary shelters waiting for permanent housing to be provided elsewhere.

Research Context

This report builds on existing research completed by the Joint Learning Initiative on Faith and Local Communities (JLI F&LC) who have a Learning Hub devoted to lessons learned on faith and resilience for humanitarian actors. In 2013 a scoping report on "Local Faith Communities and the Promotion of Resilience in Humanitarian Situations"[8] was published, making several key recommendations for continued research about local faith communities' (LFCs) impact on resilience. Notably it stated that, "Further inquiry is required into the added value of working with LFCs, including the use of social capital in community based responses, [and] the importance of religious values and beliefs for responding to and preparing for disasters..." This report now adds to the evidence base on the role of values and beliefs in disaster as well as exploring the place of social and spiritual capital in community resilience and its relation to the different types of organisation that work with communities.

Many of the discussions on resilience in humanitarian and development research centre on its technological aspects. While these are undeniably important, resilience can conceptually involve the whole human, including the cultural, social, and spiritual aspects of their life. In the field of psychology it is now well recorded that faith can play a vital role in recovery from trauma and contribute to future resilience[9] but this influence has only recently become a theme in humanitarian research.[10] Likewise, difficulties in integrating religious communities into programming for building social capital in disaster resilience have also been noted.[11] Bearing this in mind, few studies have specifically asked beneficiaries their opinions linked to faith, relief, and resilience. While the etymological roots of the term 'resilience' have been traced to early theological ideas[12], questions persist around the influence of faith in affected populations' perceptions of their own resilience in the present day.[13]

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[7] A barangay is the smallest level of administrative management in the Philippines. It is commonly used to refer to villages and neighbourhoods. Each barangay has a captain that heads local level management.

[8] Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Ager, "Local Faith Communities and the Promotion of Resilience in Humanitarian Situations: A Scoping Study."

[9] Ai, Peterson, and Huang, "The Effect of Religious–Spiritual Coping on Positive Attitudes of Adult Muslim Refugees From Kosovo and Bosnia"; Ai et al., "Character Strengths and Deep Connections Following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita"; Ai et al., "Prayers, Spiritual Support, and Positive Attitudes in Coping With the September 11 National Crisis"; Chan, Rhodes, and Pérez, "A Prospective Study of Religiousness and Psychological Distress Among Female Survivors of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita"; McCombs, "The Spiritual Dimensions of Caring for People Affected by Disasters."

[10] Ager, Ager, and Abebe, "Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Humanitarian Emergencies in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities for Engaging with the Faith Sector"; Zoma, "Respecting Faiths, Avoiding Harm: Psychosocial Assistance in Jordan and the United States"; Schafer, "Spirituality and Mental Health in Humanitarian Contexts: An Exploration Based on World Vision's Haiti Earthquake Response"; de Milliano, "Powerful Streams."

[11] Twigg, "Characteristics of a Disaster-Resilient Community," 61.

[12] Alexander, "Resilience and Disaster Risk Reduction: An Etymological Journey."

[13] Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Ager, "Local Faith Communities and the Promotion of Resilience in Humanitarian Situations: A Scoping Study."

Although there are many definitions of resilience, arising from different disciplinary backgrounds, in the humanitarian and development world the UNISDR definition is commonly used. This definition states that resilience is: "The ability of a system, community or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate to and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and functions."[14] This definition particularly focuses on the "preservation" and "restoration" of structures and functions. A more recent definition from DFID demonstrates an evolution in thinking that recognises the previous system may have allowed for a hazard to have a greater impact because of existing vulnerabilities. DFID propose "Disaster Resilience is the ability of countries, communities and households to manage change, by maintaining or transforming living standards in the face of shocks or stresses - such as earthquakes, drought or violent conflict - without compromising their long-term prospects."[15] This focus on transformation, as well as maintenance, is the crucial difference that makes it the preferred definition here.

Some further specifications are needed for this study. Community-level resilience (rather than systems or society-level resilience) is the particular focus of the study. Likewise, this research specifically focuses on typhoons and their effects (e.g. storm surges) as the main type of shock. Extrapolation to other hazards or other levels of resilience is therefore unadvisable. In focus groups a streamlined definition, using the example of bamboo springing back into shape after it had been pushed over, was given as a basis. This example focuses on the restoration of the status quo. Yet, as Manyena puts it, "it is important to point out that resilience is arguably about people's capacity far beyond the minimum of being able to cope." Resilience also includes "people's aspirations to be outside the high risk zone altogether."[16] It was therefore also emphasised in focus groups that an idea of future improvement should be kept in mind – i.e. what has improved your resilience if another typhoon of a similar size was to hit again? Resilience is a contested term but definitions of religion and faith are even more hotly disputed. Participants' definitions of what is linked to faith or 'faith-based' may be very different from the international humanitarian system's usual understanding. As this research is concerned with how people perceive faith and its influence, rather than imposing pre-defined meanings, the results are based on participants' own definitions and understanding of these ideas.

A basic framework for analysis has been adopted. The Global Hunger Index (GHI) and UNDP's Disaster Resilience Measurements[17] cite the use of capacities as a central component for understanding community resilience. Resilience, in this framing, is made up of three core capacities:

1. "**Absorptive capacity** covers the coping strategies individuals, households, or communities use to moderate or buffer the impacts of shocks on their livelihoods and basic needs.
2. **Adaptive capacity** is the ability to learn from experience and adjust responses to changing external conditions, yet continue operating.

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[14] UNISDR, "2009 UNISDR Terminology on Disaster Risk Reduction."

[15] DFID, "Defining Disaster Resilience," 6.

[16] Manyena, "The Concept of Resilience Revisited," 446438.

[17] Béné, Wood, Newsham, Davis 2012 in Winderl, "Disaster Resilience Measurements.", 7

3. **Transformative capacity** is the capacity to create a fundamentally new system when ecological, economic, or social structures make the existing system untenable."[18]

Resilience cannot come from one of these capacities alone, but is a combination of all three. The intensity of the shock usually relates to the level and type of response needed. A smaller shock might only require a community to absorb its effects but a larger shock such as Typhoon Haiyan, which severely disrupted daily life and resulted in the loss of shelter and livelihood for many families, requires the full range of capacities for a community to manage. The capacities approach provides a framework through which the element of faith can be analysed and its importance for resilience understood.

Methodology

The research employed a primarily qualitative methodology, assisted by a mixed methods approach, which added quantitative data to complete the dataset. Thirteen focus groups took place in March 2015 with a total of 154 people participating. Additional informal interviews were also conducted with organisational staff.[19] Focus groups were conducted with adult beneficiaries. The group sessions took about two hours and were divided into two halves. In the first half small groups were formed to complete a participatory tool that was used to gather more quantitative information. In this session participants rated, on a five-point scale,[20] all the humanitarian assistance they had received in terms of its impact on their resilience. This included assistance from all agencies and organisations, secular and faith-based, including government and private actors. In the second half, the group came together to discuss the information in the participatory tool and have a more in-depth discussion of the issues at hand.

More detailed information about participant numbers, the participatory tool, and the in-depth discussions can be found in Appendix 1. NVivo[21], an analysis software programme, was used to perform qualitative and quantitative analysis. Results were coded then compared by gender, group and location. Presentation of results is structured around the three main research questions.

Five Misean Cara member organisations helped organise the group sessions. These five members[22] represent the organisations that received funding from Misean Cara to respond to Typhoon Haiyan and were purposively selected because they could help arrange focus groups with communities affected by the typhoon. These sessions were organised by the member organisations but were facilitated by the researcher, who was introduced as independent to reduce potential bias. The sample of beneficiaries represented in this research specifically relates to the Catholic experience. Participants commented on organisations from the full range of religious and secular backgrounds but most identified as Catholic, with few participants from other religious denominations.

This sample cannot be described as strictly representative as participants were selected by invitation and therefore often represent those most involved in the life of the local congregation. This is purposive sampling; it aims to select key cases and participants most relevant to the research questions at hand. As the research aimed to understand the role of faith in resilience, the sample is appropriate for this study as it represents the views of religious people who had been severely impacted by Typhoon Haiyan. Nevertheless, the

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[18] Berkes, Colding, and Folke 2003; Walker et al. 2004 in von Grember et al., "2013 Global Hunger Index.", 19
[19] This information informs the results by providing contextual insights, but is not directly reported on.
[20] Where 1 was the worst and 5 was the best.
[21] http://www.qsrinternational.com/
[22] Salesian Sisters, Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary, Daughters of Charity, the Redemptorists, and the Good Shepherd Sisters

data can also speak to broader challenges in contemporary humanitarianism by drawing out issues that are relevant to more conceptual themes under debate. Likewise, the majority of the population in these areas are Christian and thus the sample is broadly representative of local religious beliefs.

Figure 2: Participants working on the participatory tool. Photo by author, March 2015.

Results

To demonstrate how the conclusions and recommendations were formulated, this section sets out the details of the research findings on the role of faith in building resilience from the emergency phase onwards. This section is structured around the main research questions, using data from both the participatory tools and in-depth discussions.

Activities that have contributed most to resilience

This first question creates the background. It identifies what aspects of the humanitarian assistance received, from the broad range of actors present after the typhoon (secular and faith-based), that participants considered most important for their resilience. This provides a necessary base from which we can begin to isolate the effect of faith on resilience. This section directly relates to answers provided via the participatory tool, which asked participants to rate the assistance they had received in terms of its importance for their resilience. This was rated on a five-point scale, with one point representing the lowest, and five the highest or most important for improved resilience. The results below report the activities that were given the highest rating (five points). This demonstrates, the activities that were most valued for improving resilience. The following chart represents which activities were most frequently given the full rating (five points) by participants. The results demonstrate that shelter and cash-based assistance were most frequently given five points for improved resilience when results from all participants were aggregated together.
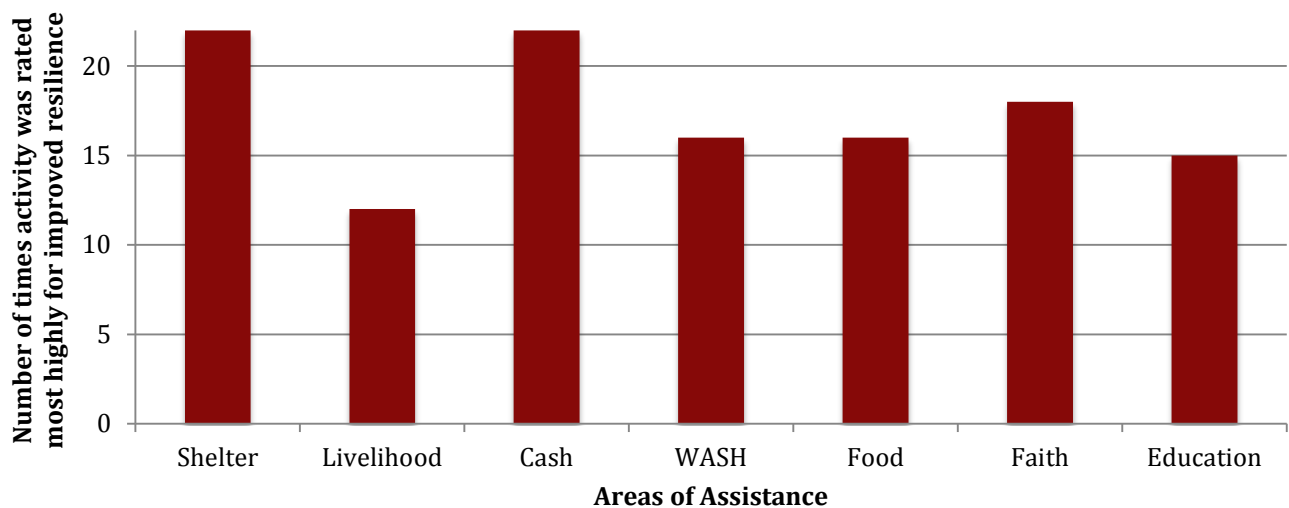

Figure 3: Overall results for most improved resilience from the data collected through the participatory tools

The full results broken down by area and with more detail about the type of assistance can be found in Appendix 2. The focus on cash is particularly noteworthy as there has been discussion in the humanitarian system about the prevalence of cash programming in the Haiyan response.[23] It has been noted that there are coordination issues between actors, and with payments[24]. However, this result seems to suggest a positive effect from the Haiyan response being "one of the world's largest humanitarian cash-based

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[23] Brown, "Are Cash Transfers the 'new Normal' in the Philippines?"; Hanley et al., "IASC Typhoon Haiyan Evaluation," 54.
[24] Smith, "Cash Coordination in the Philippines."

interventions"[25]. It must be noted that not all areas received the same type of assistance and, thus, it is impossible to definitively state that 'Cash for Work', for example, was the most important activity for improved resilience. However, some initial broad themes do emerge, including an emphasis on cash assistance (be this cash for work or direct cash transfers) and shelter assistance (including shelter repair, temporary and permanent shelter).

These impressions were then cross referenced with answers given in the discussion section of the focus groups[26], the results of which are presented in Figure 4. In these discussions a few additional activities emerged because they were anticipated rather than already completed activities. Evacuation centres, for example, were mentioned in the discussions but they had not been previously noted in the participatory tools because they were not yet built, or even planned. In this way, hopes and plans for the future of the community emerged in the more in-depth discussions.[27]
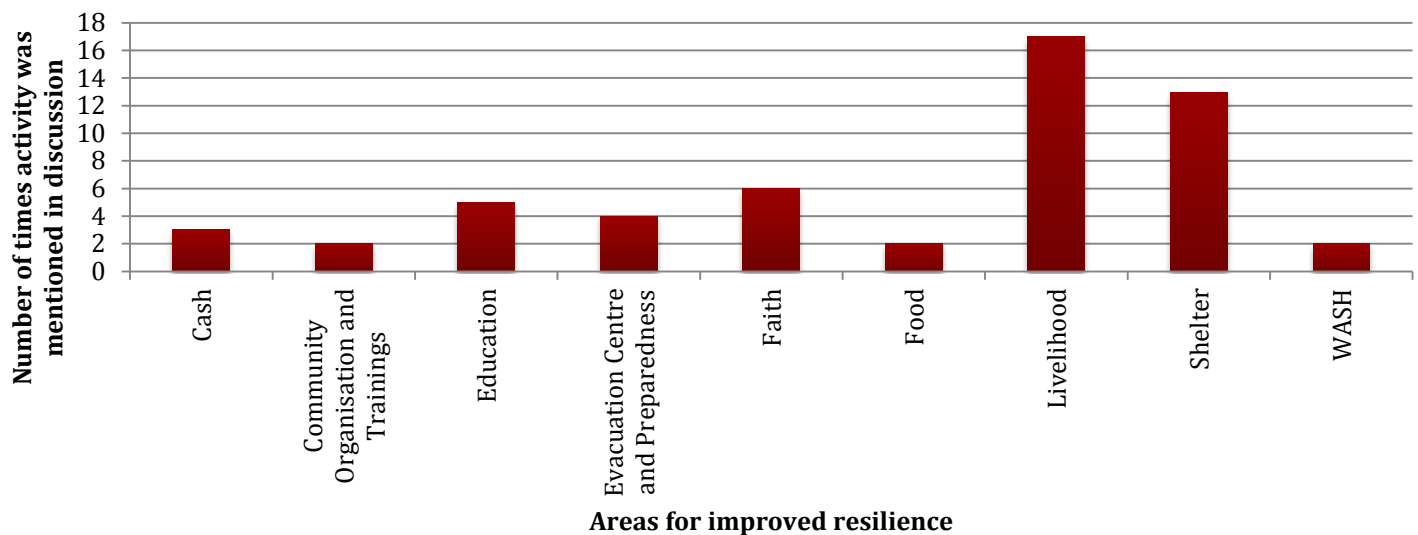

Figure 4: Chart showing the activities prioritised for resilience in discussion

In the group discussions, the importance of livelihood activities was mentioned most frequently, with shelter second. Faith was third but with considerably fewer references. Cash, in sixth place with only three references across all focus group discussions, emerged as significantly less important when compared to the results of the participatory tools mentioned above. The emphasis on cash thus diminished but the importance of shelter for resilience remained. In the listing and rating of concrete activities in the participatory tools cash was a visible component but, when speaking more abstractly in discussions about what would most improve their resilience, cash-based assistance from NGOs significantly declined in importance. When analysed by gender, men placed livelihood proportionally higher, marking it as the most important for improved resilience 55% of the time. Other activities (education, faith, shelter, WASH) were then evenly distributed as secondary. Women also ranked livelihood highest, noting it as the most important for improved resilience 30% of the time, but shelter was almost equal at 26%. Faith was then third at 12% with all other activities ranking below.

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[25] Brown, "Are Cash Transfers the 'new Normal' in the Philippines?," 29.

[26] These results now include information from Minglanilla.

[27] Whereas they were not included in results from the participatory tool as that tool is based on activities that have already happened rather than wishes for the future.

Spiritual aspects featured in all groups, showing that they are consistently judged as highly important for resilience, although subordinate to the larger consensus that emerged around shelter. Elements connected to faith and religion included spiritual formation (which includes catechism, rosary, blessings, mass etc.), chapel rehabilitation and religious items (rosary beads, bibles, statues of saints).

Factors related to faith and religion deemed to improve resilience were the third most frequently cited in the focus groups and the participatory tools. These findings therefore indicate that faith has a significant role to play in a holistic vision of resilience, which includes social and cultural capital as well as the more technological aspects of resilience, such as 'building back better'. The role of faith in these more holistic perceptions of resilience will be discussed in the next section.

The role of faith in resilience to typhoons

Building from the broader findings on factors that improve resilience presented in the first section, this section will focus more specifically on the role of faith, thus allowing a more detailed and nuanced picture to emerge. As faith and religion can be complex notions to explain, this section uses qualitative data from discussions to flesh out the response to the research question. These conversations touched on a range of themes including the family, sacrifice, responsibility and obligation. This qualitative data was quantified to give an overall picture of the main themes emerging. The most popular theme relating to faith and resilience, mentioned 27 times across the focus group discussions, was 'personal strength'. The second was 'community strength' and the third was 'prayer and ritual' cited 23 and 22 times respectively. When analysed by gender, a slightly different pattern emerges. Men prioritised personal strength gained from faith, mentioning it as important for their resilience in 36% of cases, with community strength second at 32%. For women, on the other hand, community strength came first, mentioned in 29% of cases, and personal strength second at 25%. For both men and women prayer and ritual were the third most frequently mentioned. Although these variances are minor, this shows a slightly higher preference among women for community resilience built from faith, compared to men who tend to prioritise the personal resilience they gain from faith. The next section will present the information brought up in discussions on these themes.

Personal and familial strength

One must be courageous and strong; two terms that often arose in conversations on faith and resilience. In Minglanilla, one female participant stated, "Whatever circumstances come…typhoons or even earthquakes or anything, it makes us stronger through our prayers." Another said, "Every problem that we experience, we must always be strong, because you know God is always present, in times of trouble, in times of happiness. Every time God is present in our lives." The idea of strength in the face of calamity finds its roots in faith for these participants. Faith was intimately involved in the personal endeavour to give meaning and purpose to the event. One female participant in Tacloban summed this up as, "We still have to improve our faith by giving time to go to church and then we can realise that … God has a plan." It may be a struggle (for example, the need to keep going to church expressed by this participant), but faith was seen as part of one's personal recovery by giving meaning and building personal strength.

This is also related to the idea that one is resilient when they are a good person and becoming a good person is linked to faith. As one female participant in Tacloban stated, "…you are moulded by faith. So it's more on the attitude of the people. The respect, be honest."

This conveys the idea that when one has these qualities you are more likely to be able to cope, prepare and build up the resources you will need when a typhoon strikes again. A male participant in Tanauan noted that faith was linked to his work ethic and believed that hard work could build resilience. He said, "Your faith makes work faster. It can move in thoughts and words and in the heart. If we have faith things will go smoothly and we can move freely." His faith was present in his working day. A female participant in Marabut linked faith to having a united family and drawing strength from the family unit. She said that the family makes them strong and resilient and this builds their faith in God as well. They are inexorably intertwined: faith builds the family, which in turn builds faith.

The intervention of the divine in one's personal response and resilience was also noted. A female participant in Tanauan stated, "I need to persevere together with my family. And without God's grace, I know the devastation will really despair us. If not with God's grace and God's help, he won't allow these organisations to come to our place, coming from other countries. So God is really great." This relates to the way in which God's direct involvement in resilience was perceived. As one female participant in Tacloban put it, "...without faith in God nothing is possible. God would not give us the trials if we could not cope up. So it's a test of how deep is our faith in God. Because God is a loving God, as we believe, He showed that we get back to normal after a short time. You can see the remnants of the typhoon still, but little by little we come back to normalcy." Being resilient is not just supported by faith, but also a direct sign of God's grace.

The provision of bibles, rosary beads, and saints was appreciated, but it was the activity commonly called 'Spiritual Formation' by beneficiaries that is particularly noteworthy. 'Spiritual Formation', as an activity mentioned in the participatory tools, received a range of scores. It was regularly given the highest score (5 points) but not in all cases. In conversations, however, it was frequently mentioned in a positive light as part of the moral support given by the faith-based organisations. This added information to the participatory tools, as many had not marked this spiritual support as part of the assistance given. Instead, they saw it as a vital part of their personal strength and an important aspect of assistance from faith-based organisations. For example, the Tzu Chi Foundation (a Buddhist organisation) had organised prayers with their beneficiaries and openly proclaimed their faith background. Catholic beneficiaries were open to this. As one woman in Tacloban explained about Tzu Chi, "On the meetings first they pray, it's really organised. They teach good things, values. They teach many things." Another explained that it was not the organisational background that mattered, as much as the strength that was provided through the spiritual teaching: "When Samaritan's Purse came they just give the items, you have to fall in line, you have a number, and then they give one by one. But the CRS and the Redemptorists, as well as the Tzu Chi, there is something that can bring strong faith in the person." This firstly highlights a difference in the style of humanitarian action between faith-based organisations and demonstrates that not all faith-based organisations are judged in the same way. It also explicitly expresses appreciation for activities that help to build strength and values.

Community strength

The concept of 'bayanihan'[28] is a respected method of community cooperation in the Philippines. Although it is a traditional concept it earned a renewed position in collective consciousness after Haiyan. From focus group discussions, the role of faith in this concept was expressed as a willingness to "serve" other people in the community. Their faith makes them strong, which in turn allows them to serve others. This strength has a cyclical effect, as a female participant in Cebu City put it: "We are serving for the people and because of that we should be strong because we have faith in others, and we should be strong so that we can help others." The community builds each person's strength so that they can give back to the community through their service. Prayer is also used to build up this community strength and cooperation. One woman in Tacloban related it to their work with NGOs (both secular and faith-based) following Haiyan: "In our barangay, before every activity, we pray to God to ask for his help. To help us, enlighten us, so the people cooperate with our activities."

Figure 5: The temporary chapel built in front of the ruined former chapel. Photo by author, March 2015.

While the other themes touch on the more personal, psychological aspects of faith in resilience, there were also some concrete, material factors. Participants highlighted the importance of the physical church to building their community-level resilience. They stated that it was important for them to attend mass together. The church also plays a central role in their local fiestas. The timing of Haiyan particularly impacted this as it was near Christmas and communities struggled to provide for the festivities. One barangay in Marabut had a tent chapel for Christmas, followed by a temporarily constructed wooden chapel for their fiesta in May, while waiting for funds to repair their original concrete chapel. In communities where the chapel had been damaged and rebuilt to some extent (Tanauan, Tacloban, and Marabut), this activity was ranked as highly important for improved resilience in the participatory tools (receiving the full 5 points in 75% of cases and 4 points in the rest). While naturally important for religious people, the role of the chapel in fiestas and other community events particularly highlights the central role it plays in building cultural and social capital.

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[28] The word 'bayan' means town. The phrase refers to coming together as a town or community to help each other. The idea is most commonly and simply communicated in the image of community members lifting up traditional *nipa* (a type of palm leaf) houses on bamboo poles to help a family relocate.

One particularly noticeable element of discussions around community was the link to climate change and reasons why so many typhoons have hit Filipino shores. Although it was not mentioned in every discussion, participants in Marabut, Tacloban, and Tanauan specifically stressed this aspect. Many participants had heard, through their church, that climate change plays a role in the increased severity of typhoons. One female participant in Tacloban described this experience:

> "…only last Tuesday, Father gave the penitential service in our barangay. He said that Pope Benedict was writing about seven dangerous sins; one of these is about our world. The people must know what is happening today about global warming, about climate change. If you know this, …we are educated and I think the people will be strong enough to face all the calamities we experience."

In the following conversation, she emphasised that faith and knowledge are central when faced with climate change. There was a direct link between education on climate change and involvement in religious institutions. Some participants expressed a belief in the role of the divine in bringing climate change to wake people from a stupor. Participants in Marabut explained that whenever people build up personal wealth and possessions they forget God. For them climate change is a sign to turn back to God. Other participants explained the effects of climate change as the work of humans. This did not remove God from the equation; they still trusted in the divine but emphasised the need for human action to reduce the effects of climate change.

A complex theological picture was communicated in the focus groups; this saw human agency as the cause of the destruction but with God's influence ever present. As one male participant from Tacloban stated:

> "We try to ask why God did this to us. But we never think also that we the people are caretakers of this environment and this world. We are the stewards of God's blessings and God's nature. But sometimes we never try to think about how beautiful this world is. So we threw things without thinking what will happen to the future generations. The garbage in the sea, in the open canal, and it comes back to us. We don't question God; we question why we do this. We have to follow and take good care of this world, by doing things properly."

This can be related to the Christian message of stewardship that emerged as a sub-theme from focus group discussions. Faith in the community is linked to the need to be good stewards of our environment.

Prayer and ritual

Participants in every area highlighted the importance of prayer and ritual. They emphasised that material things are not the only elements needed for coping and that prayer is an important tool for recovery and resilience. In Cebu City one male participant stated, "…it gives us life, it boosts our morale." In Northern Cebu a male participant said, "Let us pray! …the most important thing is the power of prayer." In Marabut a woman said that one must always pray as it "gives a strong heart." In Minglanilla a female participant said that, whatever comes, typhoons, earthquakes or anything else, they are strong because of their prayers. One female participant in Tacloban equally emphasised the strength that prayer can provide. She said, "When it comes to disaster, just repair and pray and be strong enough to hold together with your family and your community. That is one way to survive. What is material… that only follows." In Tanauan male participants said that, after the devastation, without their faith they would go "insane" and prayer helped them to stay sane. Another woman in Marabut said that prayer is involved in every aspect of their life, including when they start a business or before they go fishing at sea to get them a greater catch. Another said that she prays when she plants coconuts. All aspects of these livelihood activities, which were emphasised as absolutely central to resilience in the previous section, involve this element of faith.

Figure 6: Saints displayed in a temporary chapel. Photo by author, March 2015.

Yet the role of prayer should not be overstated. When questioned about the immediate needs in the aftermath of the typhoon, the quantified results from focus group discussions note 39 separate references to the prioritisation of material needs, compared to only 16 references prioritising spiritual aspects. Faith was used to provide strength and prayer, although vital to this end was not deemed sufficient in and of itself. A woman from Cebu City summed it up by saying, "So faith, that is where we gained strength, but, of course, we also need materials to help us recover." Some anxiety remained around prayer as well, particularly the ritual of the rosary. Some of the women in Tanauan and Tacloban emphasised their desire to rebuild and continue traditions they were worried might be lost. In Tacloban one woman explained that some young people in her bunkhouse had lost their parents and did not know how to pray the rosary. Without the family structure these traditions were not being continued. Another woman in Tanauan noted that after the typhoon many people who had not previously come to church had returned but they did not know how to pray the rosary. It was also mentioned in Marabut and Northern Cebu that the typhoon had reinvigorated people's efforts to attend church on a regular basis. In this way the typhoon affected some cultural change but worries were expressed about a general loss of faith among younger people. This demonstrates that a community's religious system can suffer shocks brought on by disaster and therefore must also be resilient to overcome these shocks. Over the millennia religious systems have weathered many great shocks. These findings may support the idea that such resilience stems from people simultaneously leaning on and working to rebuild their religious networks and communities. They also show, however, that the resilience of the people can be affected if their religious system is affected.

These three areas – community/familial strength, personal strength and prayer and ritual – represent how participants perceive the link between their faith and their resilience. A strong focus on building strength and "coping up", as participants often phrased it in conversation, demonstrates the important role faith plays in building people's social and cultural capital and, thus, the capacities

needed to recover, bounce back and move forward after a disaster. The final results section will now examine the role of humanitarian organisations in this interaction between faith and resilience.

Perceptions of faith-based assistance for resilience

This section focuses on distinctive elements of the faith-based approach to humanitarian action and its effect on community resilience. Findings from the participatory tools demonstrate a perceived difference between activities from faith-based and non-faith-based organisations. With the participatory tool, participants marked each activity to note whether they thought it came from a faith-based organisation or not. The activity was then also rated for its improvement of their resilience. The average score given to faith-based and non-faith based activities was then compared for each focus group. The first graph below shows these results.. This demonstrates the differences participants perceived between FBO and non-FBO activities.[29] The general trend favours FBO activities.[30] This chart is not disaggregated by activity so it demonstrates a general perception of all organisations and activities.[31]
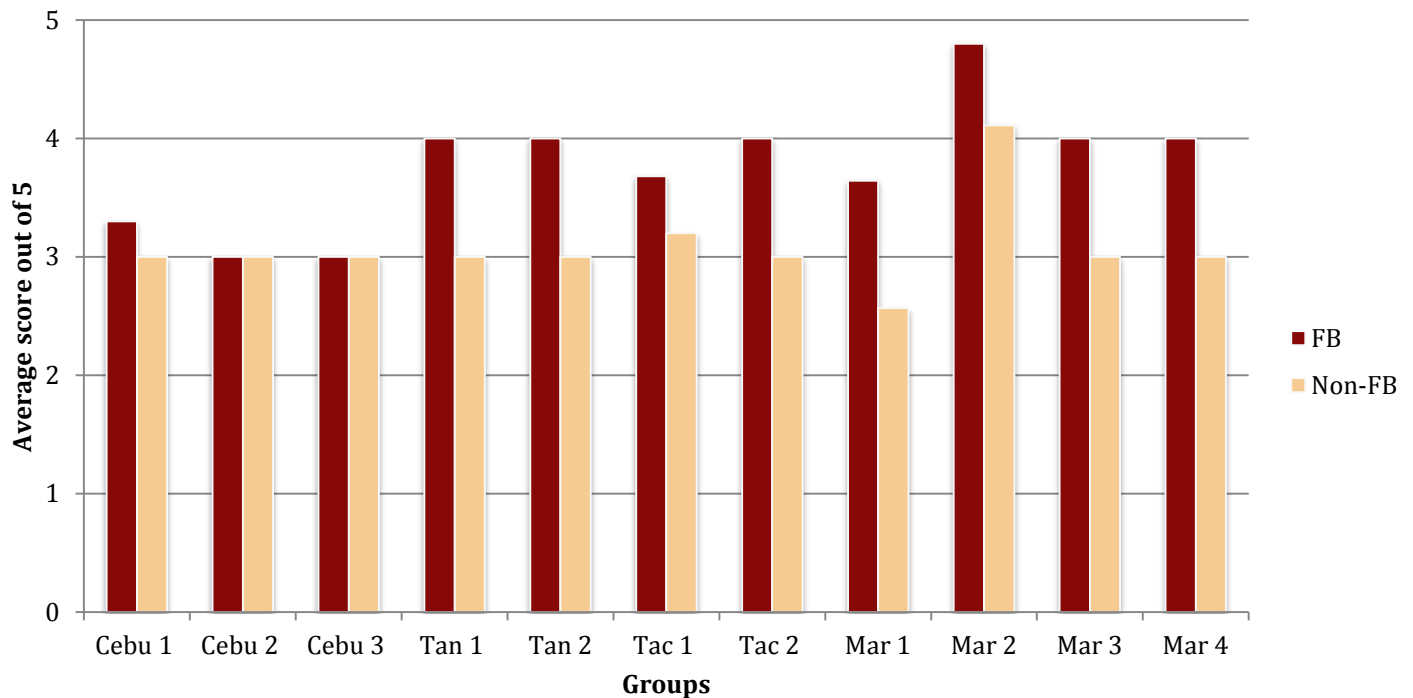

Figure 7: Average scores for the improvement of resilience given to activities from FB and non-FB organisations in each area

The results from the participatory tool give an initial picture of the perceived difference between FBOs and non-FBOs. The second method was to quantify the focus group discussion into references and create a chart to demonstrate which characteristics of faith-based organisations were mentioned most during the conversations. When participants were asked in discussions how they would

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[29] These results demonstrate participants' perceptions alone. It should be noted that some activities might have been incorrectly marked as faith-based when they came from a secular organisation or vice versa.

[30] This equalises in some areas (Cebu) and becomes accentuated in others (Marabut, Tanauan).

[31] Groups were mostly generous in their scores, as can be seen from the high averages given by most. Some groups marked particularly highly (Marabut 2), while others did not (Cebu 2), meaning that results are not comparable between groups. Taking this variation into account, however, there remains a gap, in the majority of cases, between perceptions of FBOs and non-FBOs and how they help to build resilience.

characterise faith-based and non-faith-based NGOs several points arose. Participants listed a number of basic identifying characteristics through which they could tell if an organisation was faith-based or not such as the organisation's name, their use of prayer and ritual in activities and the involvement of religious figures (nuns, priests, etc.). However, in the eyes of the participants, these were not the most prominent characteristics. The chart below shows that, when identifying FBOs, their holistic approach was mentioned most frequently, followed by their trustworthiness, the fact that they lead prayers and perform rituals, and then their long-term presence. When analysed by gender a slightly different picture emerged, with men prioritising trustworthiness and the longer-term approach (mentioned 30% and 28% of the time respectively), and women prioritising the holistic approach and the use of prayer and ritual by FBOs (noted in 24% and 21% of female cases respectively). It is a straightforward observation that FBOs are more likely to conduct prayers and rituals and the importance of these activities to participant's resilience has already been discussed. The next section will therefore discuss, in terms of their impact on resilience, the three other identifying characteristics of FBOs highlighted by participants – the holistic approach, long-term presence and trustworthiness.
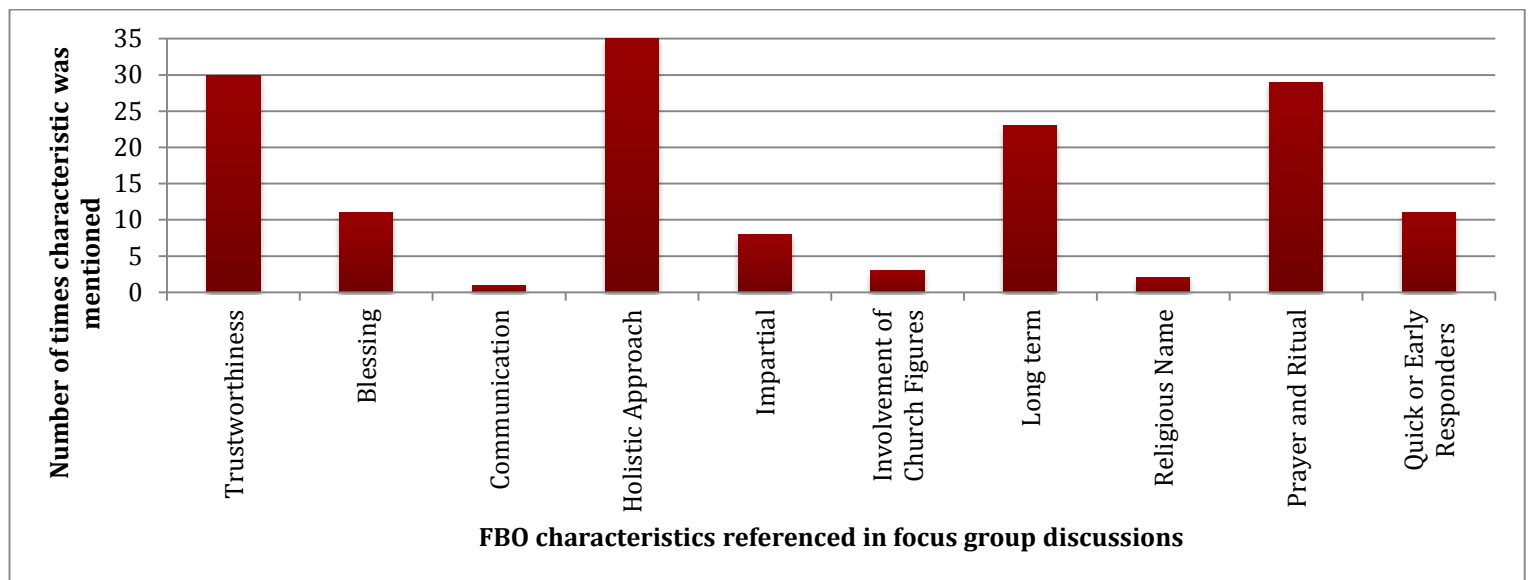

Figure 8: Chart showing frequency of themes related to FBO characteristics mentioned in focus group discussions

Holistic approach

A need to move beyond the delivery of goods alone was highlighted in all of the focus groups. Participants noted that a more human touch, involving encouragement and building up people's values, was important for their resilience. As a participant in Tacloban stated: "The Redemptorists give something and they teach… they teach a stress debriefing, uplifting words were given here. To the non-faith-based, just like DSWD, [they] give you then you go home and nothing else." A female participant in Tanauan succinctly summed up this experience: "But those faith-based, aside from the physiological things that they provide, shelter, food, clothing, what matters most is the spiritual achievement, it is more on the holistic human aspect. It tries to consider. Those things are just the material things. We can live with very little of that. What matters most is faith." This was readily compared with a more materially focused approach. As one female participant in Northern Cebu put it: "…Oxfam and other NGOs, they [are] only concerned for the things they have and they have to share it. While the other organisations, especially the faith based, …are not only providing materials things, but also the spiritual."

One participant in Marabut summed up their dissatisfaction with the non-holistic method: "When it's not done with words this is how they do it: 'Oh you are so hungry? This is your food.' We do not feel good about that. We appreciate when people speak about things, words of encouragement." Spiritual support was seen as a form of moral support, it provided a sense of encouragement to keep people going through difficult times, which built greater resilience for the future.

Participants emphasised that they felt faith-based assistance comes from the heart, demonstrating a great deal of compassion. But this sentiment was not exclusive to FBOs; there was a general perception that all who had given assistance did so from the heart. In several cases this resulted in a lack of differentiation between FBOs and non-FBOs as all were judged to be faith-based in some way. Those who provided assistance, whether via an FBO or non-FBO, were seen as people with good intentions who had provided for those in need and, therefore, exhibited characteristics of "faithful" people. But even more notably, the organisations providing assistance were seen to be the answers to prayers for help, meaning that all such organisations were sent from God and were therefore seen as faith-based in this way. As one female participant in Marabut noted, they had not expected any assistance but they believed that God would help them. She paraphrased the biblical verse from Matthew 7:7 saying, "Anyone who knocks the door would open for him. Anyone that asks will be given." While the holistic approach was particularly associated with FBOs in these communities, it must be noted that non-FBOs can act in a holistic fashion and, as a result, be judged by beneficiaries as faith-based organisations. The humanitarian system's standard definitions of what constitutes an FBO are not necessarily in line with definitions held by affected populations.

Trustworthiness

Transparency and trustworthiness were particular issues, mentioned in 10 of the 13 groups, because it was widely claimed that funds had been misused or funnelled to the wrong people during the Haiyan response. [32] Against this backdrop, a high level of trustworthiness was particularly appreciated by focus group participants, who saw themselves at the bottom of the food chain in many ways. Many expressed a frustration at the loss of goods along the way. One male participant claimed that the best food arrived in Manila to be eaten by the politicians but, by the time this assistance reached the people in affected areas, only stale rice was left. In their interactions with organisations and government agencies, participants had been made many promises and were caught up in great quantities of paperwork, only to wait on assistance that never arrived. This sense of commitment was particularly important as it was generally felt that many promises had not been followed through. Resilience suffered when these promises were broken as time was lost waiting for assistance that never arrived; if people had not been waiting other actions might have been taken. In Tacloban, one male participant said: "If funds come through religious organisations it would reach the beneficiaries. Simple as that. [But] see what happened to the Red Cross. The bulk of money from the donors went through the Red Cross and now it is not accounted for."

The amount of paperwork was a central issue for many participants. Participants stated that FBOs did not require as much paperwork. This did not damage their perceived transparency (as one might expect if there is no paper trail for follow up) but increased it. As one male participant in Tacloban summed it up: "There is not much paperwork, they really give what they say." The problem with paperwork was that participants in some areas had been asked to sign for assistance they had never received. Paperwork was not associated with increased transparency, but with commitments that would never be fulfilled.

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[32] See, for example, Francisco, "Hero to Zero? Philippine President Feels Typhoon Backlash"; ACT Alliance, "Haiyan Survivors Join State of the Nation Protest March"; Mongaya, "Tens of Thousands Demand Justice for Typhoon Haiyan Victims in the Philippines."

Long-term

The length of time the organisation remained in the area was also a popular characteristic. This was about time, but also about relationships. The participants knew some of the smaller FBOs well and had interacted with them frequently. In Minglanilla, the presence of the congregation in the community for many decades meant that people preferred to transfer to their grounds when evacuating instead of waiting for local government provisions. In this particular example, the barangay officials cooperated with the sisters and often transferred other people to their grounds. The sisters had also listened to the needs of the population and had secured funds to construct a purpose-built evacuation building that would also be used as classrooms. In Tacloban one female participant singled out the missionary organisation as the most significant contributor to community resilience:

> *"Redemptorists, because aside from the activities, they are going to be here for the future, also for the education of the youth and the children, the street children and the indigent. The church supports more than 100 children. After Yolanda, there was also a scholarship programme for more than 100 college students, as a support to the families so that the children continue their studies. There is also improving resiliency to help [the] barangay, helping them with the school in our barangay next to the church. So there is all the work in the future that the Redemptorists will do."*

It is the long-term outlook that set the missionary organisations apart from other actors and ensured their impact on community resilience. These organisations were present before the emergency, assisted during the emergency, and could also be relied on to stay helping the community into the future, after the emergency. This was noted in stark contrast to other organisations. One male participant in Northern Cebu joked that he was "…very thankful comparing to others that came here only once. Once in a blue moon!" Participants consistently highlighted the fact that other organisations rarely followed up, that they had not seen them since their initial distribution apart from perhaps one monitoring visit afterwards. A male participant in Marabut described this short-term method as "give and go." For him, the FBOs were those organisations that returned. Again, this was a sign of compassion and care that marked a crucial difference between FBOs and non-FBOs in participants' eyes.

But not all FBOs behaved in this manner. It is important to make a distinction here between different types of organisation. Organisations that operated in the traditional humanitarian model of distribution alone, without much follow-up, were classed as non-faith-based, even if they had operated in highly religious ways (e.g. bible sharing). Participants did not need to definitively classify organisations as FBOs or non-FBOs. Rather, they envisaged a sliding scale. Some FBOs did not have a long-term presence in the community and, therefore, may not be viewed as faith-based despite orchestrating obviously religious activities such as bible sharing. As one male participant in Tanauan put it, "The Daughters of Charity have a long lasting effect here. Because they're still in our barangay. Unlike Samaritan and Newlife, they were off and on and now you can't see them anymore."

FBOs, for these participants in the Philippines following Typhoon Haiyan, are organisations that have a holistic approach, are trustworthy, and have a longer-term impact. While this may not be the case in other contexts, in the Philippines these were the three resilience-building characteristics of FBOs identified by respondents in this study. The implications of these results for future humanitarian action, as well as our broader perceptions of resilience, will now be discussed in the final section.

Analysis and Conclusions

The results spoke to two key areas: people's conceptions of their personal and community-level resilience and people's perceptions of different organisations in terms of their contribution to building resilience. The following analysis will be divided along these lines.

People's resilience

Much has been made of the resilient spirit of the Filipinos.[33] As an exploration of the role of faith in building resilience after emergencies, the results point toward the vital role faith had to play in the picture of personal, familial and community resilience following Typhoon Haiyan, particularly regarding absorptive and adaptive capacities. Prayer was a central element of resilience. While some emphasis on prayer is noted in previous literature,[34] the centrality of prayer in both the spiritual and the material was unanticipated. The response to material needs was important for building resilience but prayer was also critical in every aspect of resilience: linked to material, psychological, individual and community components of resilience. For example, material aspects, such as the provision of boats and fishing nets, are necessary for building livelihoods and associated economic resilience, but they are also infused with a sense of prayerfulness (praying before each catch, blessing boats etc.). These responses demonstrate that prayer is part of the process that gives strength at the individual level, which then carries through to the family and the community level. The material is needed to rebuild shelter and restart livelihoods but it is supported by and grounded in people's strength, which is reinforced by prayer.

Respondents described prayer as helping them to cope with the impacts of the typhoon without necessitating any fundamental change – an absorptive capacity that allows people to cope with disaster. Likewise, with material provision linked to faith, such as church building, bibles and saints, the previous status quo was restored. Respondents also tended towards description of events in terms of divine intervention. This can be viewed as a barrier to more exigent and transformational forms of improving community resilience. It can also be interpreted as a potentially worrying signal of both aid dependency and dependency on divine intervention; faith in God gave people the 'resilience' to wait for outside help. This is neither personal nor community capacity, it is dependent on an outside source and reveals that what these beneficiaries understand resilience to be includes the work of external actors such as NGOs or the divine. NGO definitions of resilience are based on building personal and community capacity, so that NGO work is eventually not needed. The message from these communities, however, is that their understanding of resilience includes NGOs and that NGOs' role has become incorporated into the landscape of their faith.

Even when there is no external assistance, from governmental agencies or NGOs, faith builds critical absorptive capacity and helps people find the strength to continue. As was noted above, resilience is a combination of all capacities and transformation would not be

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[33] Hanley et al., "IASC Typhoon Haiyan Evaluation," vi.

[34] Parsitau, "The Role of Faith and Faith-Based Organizations among Internally Displaced Persons in Kenya"; Fernando and Hebert, "Resiliency and Recovery"; Bankoff, "In the Eye of the Storm: The Social Construction of the Forces of Nature and the Climatic and Seismic Construction of God in the Philippines"; Wong-Fernandez, "Psychosocial Response of Women to Two Types of Disaster in the Philippines."

possible without absorptive and adaptive capacities. Participants would regularly state that their faith is "first", "the most important" or "the very best foundation" in life. While this may seem to contradict answers given in the participatory tools that prioritise shelter, cash, and livelihood endeavours, these opinions are not, in fact, mutually exclusive. This is because the role of faith takes on a more abstract role. It was an all-encompassing notion of, as one female participant from Tanauan put it, "Faith first. A commitment to serve as well. And courage to withstand. Our faith helps these, and material is secondary." The role of faith was not portrayed as an element that sat alongside notions of livelihood or shelter. Instead, it acted as the umbrella under which these more practical aspects fell.

Figure 9: A rehabilitated chapel near Tanauan. Photo by author, March 2015.

Likewise, faith was not only absorptive or dependent on external agency. Faith was not presented as oblivious or unaware of risk but, rather, it was associated with prevention and preparedness measures. Some scholars have categorised disasters as acts of God, nature or man. In this literature the view has been espoused that seeing a disaster as an act of God makes one fatalistic and resigned from the need to act.[35] This was not the case in these focus groups. Although faith was used to provide personal strength, and helped to diminish fear, it also played a role in people, at the individual and wider community level, becoming more active in prevention and preparedness

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[35] Steinberg, *Acts of God: The Unnatural History of Natural Disaster in America.*

measures. In the participants' eyes, God's omnipotence and omniscience readily rests alongside individual and community responsibility. Future resilience was not a matter of leaving it all to fate. As one male participant in Tacloban stated: "We have to be strong and we have to be prepared. But we have to put ourselves in the faith of our Lord. No matter what will come we have to be ready and we have to be strong but we bring all this to our faith in God." Faith was motivating and a driving force behind individual and community-based decisions around preparedness. Blame was not apportioned to the divine as such. Instead the activities of the human (being strong and prepared) were entrusted to God. In this way faith, as a problem solving mechanism, is part of their adaptive capacities, it is motivation for adapting to disaster and allowing positive change to arise. One male participant in Tanauan explained that faith is the strongest and ultimate weapon to combat catastrophe. For him, in every problem one encounters, God will be there to guide us and help us solve the problem. Being resilient, in this sense, is a form of problem solving, a way of managing what has happened and improving for the next time. Faith is therefore intimately linked to the decision-making processes that lead to resilient individuals and communities.

It must be remembered that the institution of the Catholic Church in the Philippines remains prominent and, for the most part, trusted. This is particularly so at the local level with individual priests and nuns. As such, the Church has an influential role in the communication of such messages. While raising potential concerns regarding dependency issues, spiritual formation can be viewed as an adaptive, or even transformative, capacity. Participants positively described learning lessons from the Bible in catechism and following messages from the priests in mass, reporting that it allowed them to gain knowledge on issues such as climate change. Furthermore, while it is the case that many FBOs were of the same religious background as the communities represented, the case of Tzu Chi in Tacloban serves as evidence that participants also appreciated interfaith spiritual formation. The research highlighted the role religious networks can play in communicating messages on resilience, preparedness, climate change adaptation and other crosscutting issues. The power of the pulpit has been emphasised in other projects, notably on advocacy against gender-based violence in Uganda.[36] Participants also viewed other spiritual formations as helping to build better people that were stronger and more resilient. Indeed, the messages that had been received on climate change, as well as personal characteristics such as being responsible, build up the individual and the community to make important behaviour changes.

Organisations' positions for building resilience

The results revealed differences between faith-based and non-faith-based organisations. Generally it can be said that participants had a clear idea in their mind of what is different between these approaches. Participants judged actors on their actions and activities that would not usually be considered 'humanitarian' (e.g. spiritual formation). The division in judgments of assistance focused around a separation between the material and the spiritual. Participants emphasised that assistance in the form of 'encouragement' and 'morale support' was greatly appreciated in this context. In contrast, respondents noted that non-faith-based humanitarian action mostly focused on the material, as is supported by other literature on the subject.[37]

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[36] Sauvé, Farrell, and Michau, "Through the Voice of Faith: Learning to Inspire Domestic Violence Prevention Through Faith Institutions."

[37] Redfield, "Secular Humanitarianism and the Value of Life."

The study also reveals gaps in the current understanding of what it means to be an FBO. There have been attempts to categorise faith-based organisations[38] from the organisational perspective and develop indicators for what constitutes an FBO (mission and vision, recruitment policies, funding streams, etc.), but few have included the beneficiary perspective. Contrary to how many humanitarian actors judge faith-based organisations, participants judged such organisations on their operations on the ground, rather than mission, vision or funding streams. Respondents viewed long-term commitments, showing compassion, and being trustworthy as markers of faith-based organisations, alongside more obvious aspects such as prayer sessions, the delivery of bibles and the name of the organisation. They felt that 'true' FBOs delivered what they promised. This was encouraged by FBOs', and particularly missionary organisations' tendency to stay in country for a longer time thus allowing real relationships of trust to be built. These organisations were there before the emergency, they assisted during the emergency and they can be trusted to stay and help rebuild after the emergency. They will be part of the community into the future. As one female participant in Tacloban summed up, "…the other non-FBO they are just following the command of the upper people. When it comes to the religious, they already have time to think about what is the solution of tomorrow." This has previously been noted as the missionaries' advantage in winning hearts and minds of the people they work with.[39] While it is not necessarily expected that INGOs would commit at this level, because the mandates of FBOs and non-FBOs are not the same, it is worth noting that beneficiaries do see a clear distinction between these organisations.

The importance of understanding the specific religious context for all types of organisation, from the largest INGOs to the smallest missionary organisations, cannot be understated. In recent years, the humanitarian community has been criticised for its marginalisation of religious belief and inadequate handling of differing cultural norms.[40] Pitfalls can arise with humanitarians' attempts at cultural sensitivity when they are ill informed of the cultural environment in which they operate. While secular humanitarian action aims to be neutral and impartial, it has been increasingly argued that a secular humanitarian agenda is not, in fact, neutral and carries many assumptions that impact the way humanitarians work in culturally diverse and strongly religious areas.[41] On the other hand, faith-centred activities can be suspect in the usual workings of the humanitarian system as they signal the loss of impartiality and neutrality as well as problems of conditionality of assistance. While it is necessary to recognise the downsides of religious institutions and their pressures on societal norms, these negatives can be quite removed from the daily, lived religion of affected populations coping in the aftermath of disaster. Participants emphasised the significance of social networks around a shared faith, participation, cooperation and personal motivations invigorated by faith. This study focused on the Catholic Filipino context and, although different cultural contexts would likely affect outcomes in other cases, this research provides evidence in support of a positive role for faith in building individual and community resilience.

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[38] Thaut, "The Role of Faith in Christian Faith-Based Humanitarian Agencies: Constructing the Taxonomy"; Heffernan, Adkins, and Occhipinti, *Bridging the Gaps: Faith-Based Organizations, Neoliberalism, and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean.*

[39] Taithe, "Pyrrhic Victories? French Catholic Missionaries, Modern Expertise and Secularizing Technologies," 167.

[40] For example, Ager and Ager, "Faith and the Discourse of Secular Humanitarianism"; Taithe, "Pyrrhic Victories? French Catholic Missionaries, Modern Expertise and Secularizing Technologies"; Barnett, "Faith in the Machine? Humanitarianism in an Age of Bureaucratization."

[41] Ager and Ager, "Faith and the Discourse of Secular Humanitarianism."

Conclusion

The report makes clear that faith cuts across all areas of concern for organisations seeking to build resilience following disaster. The relationship of faith to resilience can be viewed in two ways. Faith is used to build resilience and, secondly, faith and its various structures and support mechanisms also need to be resilient because they affect people's recovery.

While instrumentalising spiritual capital for resilience building has been discouraged,[42] appreciating what faith can offer while also safeguarding the capacities it brings, could become part of resilience building activities. The report has also shown that faith is used as a signifier of organisations for affected populations. This, however, does not necessarily limit secular organisations. Lessons about delivery of assistance in a principled, humanistic manner are crucial for all. Current approaches toward localising disaster risk reduction, bottom up mechanisms and systems of accountability need to be strengthened to include this more holistic approach. Engaging local level actors for top-down interventions will not rectify this; communities must be approached with true cultural sensitivity so as not to damage existing resilience and to help further build capacities.

Resilience is held up as a 'holistic' notion that can grasp the big picture of the diverse sources of capital and capacity used by communities following disaster. 'Holistic' was also a phrase used to describe FBOs by research participants. If we use this term as a focal point, what can resilience research learn from beneficiaries' perception of holistic assistance? If resilience is labelled 'holistic' we need to re-think our understanding of its component parts. Is it as inclusive as it could and should be? From this study, this is summarised in the notion that resilience is not limited to material, technological and economic concerns, but includes cultural and faith-based aspects as well. If organisations want resilience programmes to be truly relevant and appropriate to the local context, these issues must be taken into account.

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[42] Ager, "Why Humanitarianism Doesn't Get Religion and Why It Needs To."

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Appendix 1: Extended Methodology

Prior to the commencement of the research, the researcher conducted an extensive literature review to understand the primary areas of interest in the realm of faith and humanitarian assistance. This helped to establish the gap in the literature and the main research questions.

The full focus group breakdown can be seen below. 77% of participants were women, with only 23% male participants. This was due to a number of factors including the focus groups being held in the middle of the working day in many cases and the availability of participants depending on the time and place the focus group was held. These decisions were made for practical reasons dependent on when the researcher, translators, and participants were available. While it is a research limitation on one hand, the researcher has made sure to disaggregate the data as much as possible so as to be able to compare perspectives. The data from the qualitative discussions was broken down into male and female voices so it is possible to learn from varying perspectives in analysis.

Place	Number of participants	No. Women	No. Men	Tool used?	Number of participatory tools generated
Minglanilla 1	6	6	0	N	0
Minglanilla 2	20	20	0	N	0
Cebu City 1	12	8	4	Y	4
N. Cebu 2	20	11	9	Y	4
N. Cebu 3	11	6	5	Y	4
Tanauan 1	7	7	0	Y	2
Tanauan 2	6	0	6	Y	2
Tacloban 1	12	8	4	Y	3
Tacloban 2	17	14	3	Y	4
Marabut 1	7	6	1	Y	2
Marabut 2	6	3	3	Y	1
Marabut 3	11	11	0	Y	3
Marabut 4	17	17	0	Y	4
	154	119	35		33

Although the participatory tool was used in almost all cases, it was not possible to use it in Minglanilla because the participants had only received assistance from two sources so comparison between several organisations, as is required in the tool, was not feasible. It must also be noted that the effects of the typhoon and the subsequent assistance received in these different locations often varied considerably. The context for each area is taken into account when reporting results and analysed to take these variances into account.

The participatory tool used was adapted from the Activity List Tool (ALT) from the NGO-IDEAs (Impact on Development, Empowerment and Actions) Tiny Tools for Impact Assessment. The development of the ALT originated with Dr Susanne Neubert and "MAPP - A New Method for Impact Assessment of Poverty Alleviation Projects."[43] The original tool asks participants to list the different organisations present in their community, the activities they have completed, the importance of these activities for daily

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[43] Neubert, 1999 in Causemann, Gohl, and Brenner, "Tiny Tools."

life, the beneficiaries of these activities, and the amount of labour expended for each activity. It is meant to demonstrate to a community which activities have been the most worthwhile in terms of effort and outcome for their daily lives. The advantage of the tool is that it is designed to allow participants to define what activities occurred and who the recipients were, as well as asking participants to rank different activities and decide which organisations and activities were most important to them. The basic idea of this tool was then adapted to fit with the research questions in this study. The tool used in this research included the following headings:

Activity	Organisation	Faith-based? Yes or No	Recipients	Importance for daily life	Improved Resilience

Participants were given paper and pens[44] and asked to create a table in small groups (of about 3 people) of all the different activities and organisations they had received assistance from in their community. The activities were not pre-selected and the groups worded the names of the activities themselves. They listed all the activities they had experienced, which meant that some areas had much longer lists than other areas dependent on the number of organisations that had delivered assistance in each place. Each activity from each organisation received its own line meaning that, for example, if several different organisations had delivered food packs, each organisation and its food pack was rated separately. This was to highlight differences between organisations. Participants then completed the table by providing a judgment whether the organisations were faith-based or not (the reasons for which were then discussed in the following conversation), who had received this assistance, and then, most importantly, they ranked the activity first on its usefulness for the resumption of daily life after the typhoon and then for its impact on their resilience.

An example of the participatory tool used. Photo by author, March 2015.
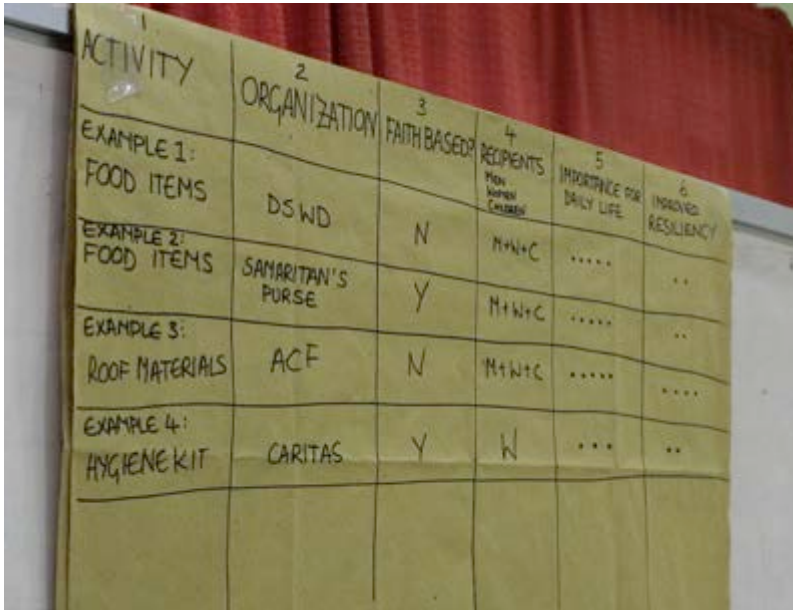
The rating system was a five-point scale. 1 point was marked for the least important or smallest improvement and 5 points were marked for the most importance or greatest improvement. For example, a food pack might rate highly for daily life after the typhoon and receive 5 points, however it does not last and as such would not rate highly for improving resilience. In this sense, the tool placed emphasis on the idea of resilience as something that could be built up in the face of future typhoon threats. The fifth column was included so as to provide a counterpoint to the sixth column on resilience. Rather than the resilience rating becoming a judgment of which activities were good in general, the two stage rating process was included to highlight the difference between activities that were immediately useful and then the ones that built up future resilience. For the sixth column, participants were encouraged to reflect on what would help them if another typhoon were to arrive. An example of the participatory tool can be seen in the photo here.

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[44] Participants were almost all literate. There were only two cases in which participants had difficulty and in these cases they were in groups with other literate members who could record their answers and were participating in the conversation.

Participatory tools are helpful in giving an impression, but cannot be relied upon for incredibly precise quantitative data. Discrepancy can arrive in how participants are willing to rate activities. For example, some participants may only vary activities between 4 and 5 points, with some of the least appreciated activities still receiving 3 points, whereas others use the full range of scores available to them. The threat of this bias was minimised as much as possible during the group activity by the principal researcher and facilitator carefully explaining the need to use the full range of ranks available and emphasising the need to differentiate between activities (to ensure, for example, that all activities were not rated 5 points). As some level of bias remains unavoidable it is unhelpful to put too much weight on the difference between 3 points or 4 points for example. Instead, the extremes and averages at either end of the ranking in each group can be used to provide an impression of what was most and least appreciated.

While the participatory tool can tell us about what members of a community received and roughly how much they appreciated it, further discussion is needed to understand why. The group conversation then used the participatory tool as a basis of discussion. The participatory tool was expanded on to allow a more comprehensive understanding of why particular activities or organisations were rated highly or not. The columns then provided the basis of conversation, with further questions particularly being asked on what constituted a faith-based organisation and what contributed to resilience in the participants' eyes. The focus group discussions were based on a series of semi-structured questions. The questions were used as a basis of conversation and other questions were asked as conversations progressed. A list of the basic questions for the group discussion can be found in Appendix 3.

Only information from adult participants is used in this research. Consent from participants for their responses to be used in the report was gathered verbally at the beginning. It was explained that all information would be used anonymously – no names, or names of their particular barangays would be used so as to ensure they felt able to speak openly. Confidentiality is ensured by allotting broad categorisations to respondents and focus groups without recording the specific details of names in the dataset. It was also explained that they were not obliged to answer any questions that they did not want to and that they could withdraw at any point. Focus groups were conducted in a mixture of English, Tagalog, and local languages including Cebuano and Waray. Translators from the member organisations aided the principal researcher with Tagalog and local languages. Translators were briefed on the aims of the research beforehand and the principal researcher continually checked translations during the focus groups.

Data was analysed using the qualitative analysis software, NVivo, which aids the researcher in coding qualitative data into pre-defined themes as well as inductively drawing out emerging themes from the data. The information from the participatory tool was analysed quantitatively to demonstrate which activities were ranked most highly for daily life and resilience. Types of activities were aggregated into groups for better comparison of common themes. For example, one group might state "roof materials" as an activity, while another might put "GI sheets". These were aggregated into a group called "shelter" so as to give an understanding of what was important, without having to list every definition or phrasing of different activities. Results were then filtered through the lens of whether the activity had been completed by organisations marked as faith-based or not to ascertain if there was any correlation between rankings and organisations perceived to be faith-based. The results from each group were then cross-compared between focus groups.

Appendix 2: Results for most improved resilience from the participatory tools by area

Data from Tacloban and Marabut show the amount of assistance that followed the typhoon in the broad range of different types of activities they experienced. These areas, especially Tacloban, were the focus of the international aid effort and this is reflected in a larger number of options occurring in the charts of their most highly ranked activities for improved resilience. This is in comparison to Cebu that received less and therefore presents fewer options. One focus group in Cebu (N. Cebu 3) gave no activity full scores and is therefore not represented in these results. The phrases used for each activity have been combined to facilitate analysis of the data (e.g. when 'chapel repair' and 'chapel rehabilitation' were both used by respondents to refer to the same activity, the term 'chapel rehab' is used in the results), but phrases have not been streamlined any further (e.g. 'kitchen utensils' is left as is rather than grouped under 'NFIs').
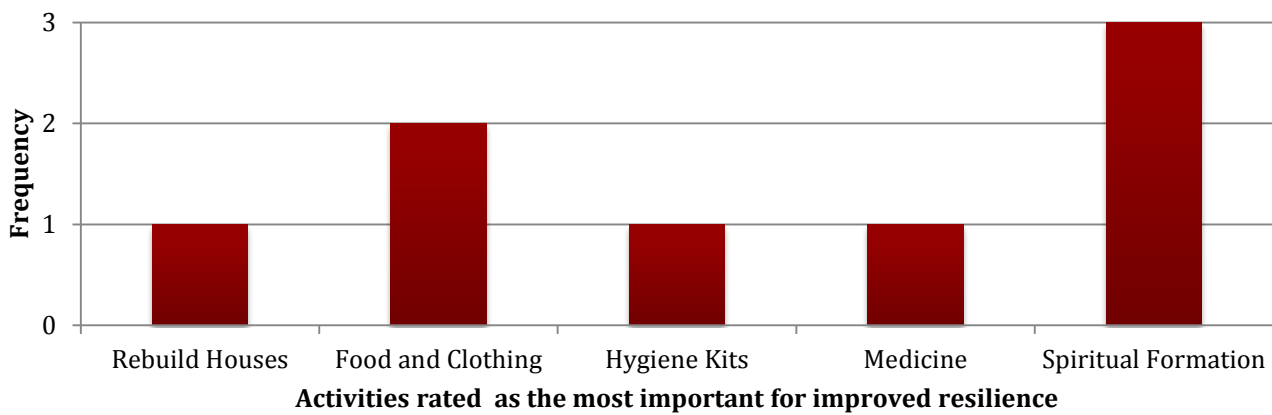

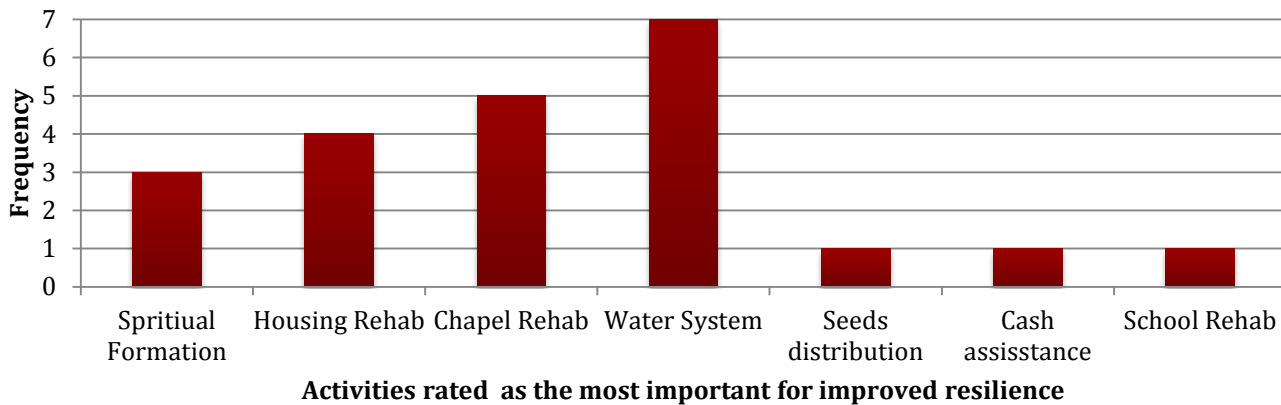**Figure 10: Most improved resilience result from Cebu**

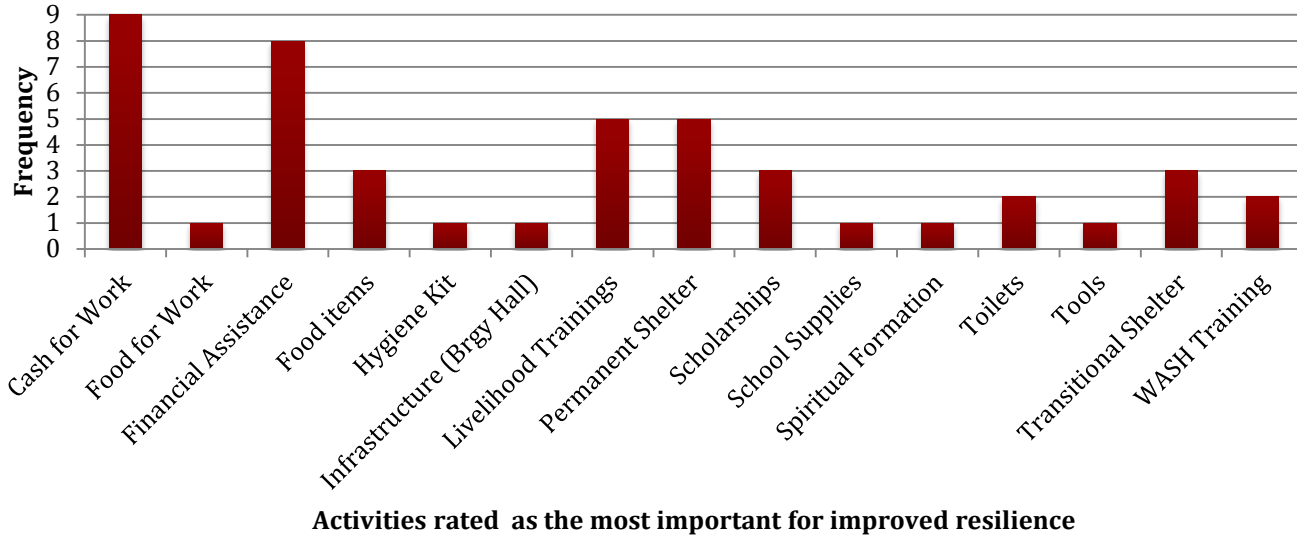**Figure 11: Most improved resilience results from Tanauan**

Activities rated as the most important for improved resilience

Figure 12: Most improved resilience results from Tacloban

Activities rated as the most important for improved resilience
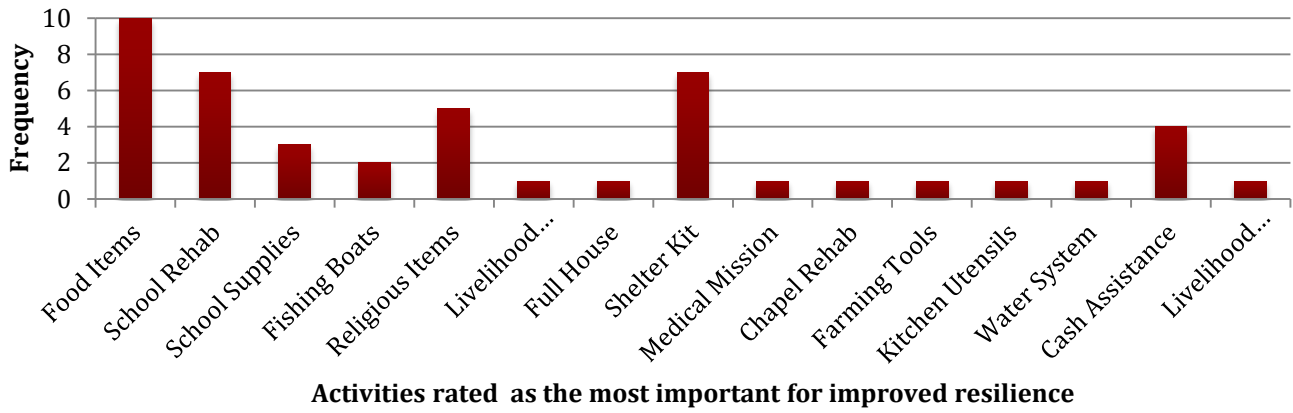
Figure 13: Most improved resilience results from Marabut

Appendix 3: Semi-structured questions

This list represents the basic set of questions that were asked at each focus group discussion. As the discussions were semi-structured, additional questions may have been asked depending on the conversation.

- What are the top three things that are most important for your recovery from the Typhoon? Why?
- What's your definition of resilience?
- Is faith involved in any way?
- What are the top three things that are most important for your resilience to typhoons? Why?
- What activities linked to faith or religion help your resilience?
- Which organisations helped the most for your resilience? How?
- Which organisations are faith-based?
- How can you tell they are faith-based?
- How can you tell an organisation is not faith-based?