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# Measuring the value of using social protection for emergency response:

## Case study of the Emergency Cash Transfer response to Super Typhoon Egay in the Philippines

August 2024

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# Executive summary

## Study overview

**This research examines how the Government of the Philippines used the Emergency Cash Transfer (ECT) programme, and the social protection systems underpinning it, to respond to Super Typhoon Egay which struck the country in July 2023**. It is one of three case studies (others are in Bangladesh and Kenya) exploring qualitatively and quantitatively investments by governments in social protection to render it viable for disaster response. We look at policy intent; how schemes work in practice across the stages of assessment, enrolment, transfer provision and case management; the drivers of costs and processes; and strategic implications.

**Egay made landfall on 25 July, and left the Philippine Area of Responsibility (PAR) two days later.** Some of the flooding it caused remained into 2024, when interventions for recovery and rehabilitation were still ongoing. Some 3.6 million persons were affected, especially in the north, causing over 600,000 to be internally displaced and 30 deaths. Typhoon Falcon followed in the same week. It is instructive to learn from the response to such typhoons, as on average, 20 typhoons cross the PAR each year; they are increasing in intensity and in the cost of damage.

**Authorities deliver many social protection programmes with a remit related to disasters.** The ECT—a programme of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), which gives up to 90 days of unconditional cash at 75% of the regional minimum wage—is a key scheme, along with the Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation (AICS), and several others.

**The team collected primary data in the Philippines with over 50 respondents in February–March 2024.** They also conducted thorough data analysis and a documentary review. Two main limitations were, first, the limited availability of cost data, notably the ECT's administrative costs; and second, owing to constraints the team held relatively few interviews at municipal level, so not all the unique experiences and solutions may be captured here.

## Resources, inputs and the policy environment

**The Philippines has established a comprehensive social protection system, in which 'shock-responsiveness' increasingly features.** The role of social protection is also recognised in policies and legislation for disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM), including in the National DRRM Plan and the main legal instrument, the Republic Act. No. 10121 of 2010. Several schemes combine social protection and DRRM functions; for some (e.g. the ECT) this is their core objective, while others support people in any type of crisis (e.g. AICS), or mainly offer longer term social protection but can be adjusted in a disaster (e.g. the '4Ps').

**The National DRRM Council and its local equivalents oversee DRRM policies nationwide.** The DSWD, the main social protection ministry, is one of four vice-chairs of the council and leads its 'disaster response' pillar. It has a dedicated bureau for disaster response, called DRMB. DSWD has a field office in every region, each of which also has a division for DRRM.

**Local government units (LGUs), the lowest level of local administration, are autonomous, not subordinate to the national government.** They have their own powers and budget and also have a crucial role in disasters, delivering their own assistance and collaborating with the DSWD. A recent Supreme Court ruling has radically revised the share of taxes released to LGUs, directing the devolution of certain functions to local levels. This has already included some DSWD programmes such as the AICS. Whether the ECT will also be devolved is as yet undecided.

**Disaster response is funded partly by pre-allocated budgets, and partly through ad-hoc requests.** Among the most commonly used for the ECT—which does not have its own budget line—are the Quick Response Funds (QRFs), National and Local DRRM Funds, and others such as budget reallocations. The declaration of a state of calamity is a vital step that mandates government agencies to use post-disaster financing instruments.

**QRFs are stand-by funds for relief and rehabilitation.** Because of its role in crises, the DSWD is one of a small group of agencies entitled to a pre-allocated QRF every year. It can only be used after a disaster, not for prevention or preparedness for which other funds exist. ECT payments to households can come from here. Once an agency has exhausted at least half of its allocation it can seek more funds from one of the two pots of the NDRRM Fund, one also a QRF and the other a Calamity Fund; however, agencies must compete for a share of the same resources, perhaps for the same disaster, and the approval processes are slower. LGUs, too, must put aside a share of their budget (5%) as a QRF. The government can accept international assistance, though it predominantly relies on its own resources.

**Many of these arrangements are well suited to frequent rapid-onset disasters, especially the QRFs.** To maximise impact, financing must be not only sufficient but also accessible, timely and able to be used as required. The process for obtaining some of the resources is subject to delays. Historically, all these budgets tend not to be fully utilised despite demand. Innovations to speed up transfers to households, such as 'anticipatory action' approaches, are being piloted.

**The government has a bold digitalisation agenda, especially since COVID-19.** National policy promotes digital systems whose reach extends far beyond social protection. These investments could benefit all the DSWD's programmes. In 2021 a national identification system was launched, known as PhilSys. All citizens and residents will have a unique identifier. By March 2024 it had covered 85 million people. In social protection it could simplify verification, ensure assistance reaches the right person, and make it easier to link programme databases.

**There are two digital systems for understanding household vulnerability.** One, called Listahanan, has been used since 2010 for social protection, notably to identify eligible recipients of the 4Ps programme; it should be updated every four years. The other, the Community-Based Monitoring System (CBMS), was re-introduced in its latest form by a law of 2019. At the time of Egay, the Listahanan had not been updated for some years while the CBMS had not been fully rolled out; and the transfer of responsibility from central to local authorities had not been specified. The uncertainty had ramifications for the use of both databases by the ECT.

**As for digital payments, the Philippines has transformed its landscape fast.** While in 2013 only 1% of payments were digital, by 2023 it stood at 50%. However, poorer households, who

may be the target of programmes such as the ECT, tend to be less likely to live in areas with mobile network coverage, and also less likely to own a smartphone with digital payment apps. The DSWD recognizes the importance of digitalising aspects of social protection. It is working with the World Bank and others on projects to improve delivery systems. It has also signed memoranda of understanding with the Philippine Statistical Authority on the use of PhilSys, and with the Land Bank of the Philippines to begin a move away from purely manual disbursement.

## Super Typhoon Egay and the ECT response

**When Egay hit, and in the months that followed, the DSWD, other departments and LGUs delivered cash and in-kind assistance to affected people.** As an immediate response, many people moved to evacuation centers where they received hot meals and were registered as impacted. In July and August, households received food packs, shelter assistance, AICS cash and/or emergency employment from their LGU. Damage and needs assessments were conducted. By September the ECT was being prepared, including beneficiary lists. ECT funds were disbursed from October, through to the start of 2024.

**About 225,000 households—in the region of 1 million people—were eligible for the ECT in five regions.** By March 2024, over 167,000 households, or some 74% of the target, had been paid. The approach differed from that in the ECT Operational Manual in several ways. First, the manual advises prioritising '4Ps' beneficiaries, and households registered on Listahanan. This could not be done as officials did not have access to a list of 4Ps recipients. Second, the transfer should be released within 2–6 weeks, with the option of a second tranche after 3–4 months. For the Egay response, households received a single payment around the timing of the second tranche. Third, funding constraints meant that payouts were capped at one per financial year, even for those affected by more than one disaster. We can deepen our understanding of factors determining these decisions by examining all the stages of how the programme worked.

**The assessment stage requires identifying the locations affected and the households in need in those areas.** Identifying locations was straightforward thanks to bulletins from the meteorological agency, collaborating with DSWD's operational monitoring centre and field offices. 'Preparedness for response' procedures were activated. An inventory was compiled of stockpiles of in-kind assistance and of the funds ready in the QRF. These preparations are well rehearsed and indicate the level of investment in integrating disaster preparedness with social protection. In contrast, when identifying eligible households, several digital systems that might have been used were not: names were proposed in handwritten lists by barangay chiefs. Not only were the 4Ps database and Listahanan not used, but the CBMS was not fully operational; and where it exists it is not clear how it will improve on handwritten forms as for now it relies on manual data collection with subsequent data entry in Excel, lacking interoperability.

**At enrolment stage, authorities must be satisfied as to the identity of the ECT recipient.** This is mainly the role of the barangay chief or other LGU representative. DSWD staff only have the chance to verify identities on the day they distribute the cash. Given staff shortages, only a fraction of the LGU-submitted beneficiaries were verified by the DSWD. There is a firm expectation that investments in the PhilSys will ease many difficulties in this regard.

**ECT payments for Egay were made by hand**. LGUs organised the paypoints. DSWD staff designated as Special Disbursing Officers (SDOs), and their teams, would travel to municipalities to deliver cash to recipients. This method incurred many costs, which can be expected to reduce considerably once payments become more digital: they include a large share of salaries of DSWD staff, and the opportunity cost of not being able to perform their regular duties, besides the material cost of transport and per diems during disbursement. Among the greatest strains of the manual system is the 'nightmare' financial risk absorbed by SDOs, who are personally responsible and accountable for transporting huge sums of money and for its safe distribution.

**The digitalisation of ECT payments is expected to provide great benefits to DSWD and its workers, and is a priority of the DSWD.** An executive order of 2022 allows for digitally paying beneficiaries where infrastructure is accessible, so disbursement can be done by a financial service provider, such as a bank. Key informants estimate this service charge at around PHP 50 per payment—similar to the cost of manual payments by SDOs. So, for about the same outlay, the digital process will transfer the risk while saving hundreds of days of time of DSWD staff.

**For case management, monitoring and reporting, the ECT uses the same national systems as other programmes.** The team found neither strong concerns nor strong praise for the current system: in fact, it was rarely discussed.

**Administrative costs of similar schemes vary widely, not only across programmes and countries, but also over time.** With respect to the ECT after Super Typhoon Egay, we find some features are likely to have improved the value of the response compared with alternatives, or with previous emergencies, while others were a likely constraint on cost-efficiency.

## Conclusions

**Reflecting on the social protection response to Super Typhoon Egay in 2023, a picture emerges of a set of interventions that drew on multiple layers of investment in national systems, made over years at different scales.** There are government-wide investments such as the early warning system and the NDRRM Council coordination mechanism; sector-wide investments such as the DSWD workforce and CBMS; and programme-specific investments such as the process for enrolling households to receive emergency support.

**We can conclude the following.** The normative context in the Philippines has been quite favourable to using social protection to respond to typhoons such as Egay. In practice, the results were achieved thanks to a huge, labour-intensive effort, in which many activities used manual systems. DSWD's ability to draw on the investments in systems at multiple layers is likely to generate economies of scale and in some cases improve outcomes for implementers and households alike. Integration among programmes remains complex, and delivering assistance in a context of rapid change and resource constraints is even more so. Systems develop at different rates and in divergent ways, requiring constant recalibration of the way they are interlinked and coordinated. The latest reforms may enhance cost-efficiency and quality of both DRRM and social protection. As further investments are made in systems that support social protection and DRRM, this will help guarantee assistance for those most in need.

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# Acronyms

| | |
|---|---|
| **4Ps** | Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program |
| **AICS** | Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation |
| **CAR** | Cordillera Administrative Region |
| **CBMS** | Community Based Monitoring System |
| **COA** | Commission of Audit |
| **DAFAC-IS** | Disaster Assistance Family Access Card – Information System |
| **DBM** | Department of Budget and Management |
| **DOLE** | Department of Labor and Employment |
| **DRM** | Disaster risk management |
| **DRRM** | Disaster risk reduction and management |
| **DRMB** | Disaster Risk Management Bureau |
| **DSWD** | Department of Social Welfare and Development |
| **ECT** | Emergency Cash Transfer |
| **ESA** | Emergency Shelter Assistance |
| **FACED** | Family Assistance Card in Emergencies and Disasters |
| **GAA** | General Appropriations Act |
| **G2P** | Government-to-person |
| **KALAHI-CIDSS** | Kapit-Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan-Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services |
| **LDRRMF** | Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Fund |
| **LDRRMP** | Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan |
| **LGUs** | Local Government Units |
| **MIS** | Management information system |
| **NDRRMC** | National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council |
| **NDRRMF** | National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Fund |
| **NDRRMP** | National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan |
| **NEDA** | National Economic and Development Authority |
| **NHTS-PR** | National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction |
| **OCD** | Office of Civil Defense |
| **PAR** | Philippines Area of Responsibility |
| **PAGASA** | Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Association |
| **PDP** | Philippine Development Plan |
| **PhilSys** | Philippine Identification System |
| **PHP** | Philippine peso |
| **PSA** | Philippine Statistics Authority |
| **QRF** | Quick Response Fund |
| **RA** | Republic Act |
| **SDO** | Special Disbursing Officers |
| **SLP** | Sustainable Livelihood Program |
| **TUPAD** | Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa Ating Disadvantaged/Displaced Workers |
| **UN** | United Nations |
| **USD** | United States dollar |
| **WFP** | World Food Programme |

Note: $1 = PHP 56 (March 2024 exchange rate)

# Part A. Study overview

## 1 Objectives of the global research

**What are the returns to governments on their investments in making a social protection system or its programmes a viable vehicle for national disaster response, in the event of large-scale shocks such as climate hazards?** To what extent can we trace quantitatively and qualitatively the investments made, and the benefits and challenges arising, for governments themselves and for people in need? This global research project, undertaken by the World Food Programme (WFP) with funding from the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the European Commission's Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations department (ECHO), aims to explore this question with the intent of both generating empirical evidence from three case studies, and consolidating a methodological approach that can be applied to other contexts.

**Despite growing enthusiasm for using social protection in emergency responses, there is limited evidence of the cost-efficiency, cost-effectiveness, or other return on investment from doing so.** A modest body of work in global literature analyses the cost-efficiency of social protection programmes or humanitarian programmes in various contexts, and a growing body of work models the costs, benefits, and estimated return on investment of anticipatory actions ahead of shocks. Relatively few analyses have sought to quantify the potential gains in terms of quality-of-service delivery from delivering humanitarian aid (government- or internationally led) through social protection systems.[1] There is limited understanding of the investments required in the enabling environment to best achieve the potential gains.

**This research initiative intends to begin to fill the gap.** Three light-touch case studies explore a current or recent response to shocks in Asia and Africa, each covering a different type of shock, and a different form of usage of the social protection system as part of the emergency response:

1. **Bangladesh:** analysis of approaches to using social protection systems and programmes for flood response.
2. **Philippines:** review of the Emergency Cash Transfer (ECT) programme activated to respond to Super Typhoon Egay in 2023.
3. **Kenya:** review of the use of social protection systems in WFP's drought response in 2023.

[1] For an exception, see e.g. time saved through using social protection for disaster response (Barca and Beazley, 2019).

# 2 Conceptual framework

## 2.1 Research questions

**Each case study examines one or more emergency intervention(s) delivered by a national or local government or international partner, that leverages part of a social protection system or programme.** It shines a spotlight principally on national investments and responses. The intervention may have taken place only once, in relation to a particular disaster, or may be an established mode of support used repeatedly. By 'leveraging' social protection we mean either that entities responsible for disaster risk management (DRM) integrate parts of the national social protection system into their response—such as using its workforce, coordination mechanisms, databases, payment platforms or monitoring systems—or that entities responsible for social protection contribute to disaster response through their own programmes (e.g. by temporarily expanding coverage).

**To fully understand the value of social protection in emergency response we explore six key questions** (Table 1)**.** Together these enable us to elicit four types of information: normative ('What should happen?'), diagnostic ('What is happening?'), explanatory ('Why is this happening?') and forward-looking ('What should we do next?'). These help us identify how investments are used and the benefits, challenges, and efficiencies for system-strengthening.

**Table 1. Key research questions**

| Type of information | Research questions | |
|---|---|---|
| Normative | RQ1 | What is the intent behind using social protection for emergency response: what change do implementers seek to achieve? |
| Diagnostic | RQ2 | How has the response worked in practice? |
| | RQ3 | What have been the results of the response? |
| | RQ4 | How much has the response cost? |
| Explanatory | RQ5 | What are the drivers of the costs and processes used? |
| Forward-looking | RQ6 | What practical strategies can be identified for enhancing the value of using social protection for emergency response? |

Source: Authors.

**While the research comprises several case studies, we do not generate a simplistic ranking of countries or interventions of their return on investment:** the scale and context are too divergent to offer a plausible comparison, and the results are grounded in qualitative assessments that do not lend themselves to numerical ranking. Rather, the emphasis is on the factors that drive costs and outcomes for an intervention in a given context.

## 2.2 Measuring value in terms of inputs, activities, and outputs

**The performance of any intervention can be analysed across a series of stages (**Figure 1). From an assessment of the budget ('resources'), and the human capital and material inputs

obtained ('inputs'), one can explore how the inputs are used for activities that generate outputs; and from there assess the emerging short-, medium- and long-term outcomes, up to the overall impact (DFID , 2011); (Pidd, 2012); (King & OPM, 2018). The information at each stage serves different purposes in terms of accountability, ability to influence ongoing programmes, etc.

**Figure 1 How resources deliver value: the 'return on investment' story**


Source: King and OPM (2018), derived from DFID (2011). Note: In some variants of the diagram, 'resources' and 'inputs' are combined, referring to both financial and non-financial resources together. In others, 'processes' or 'activities' are presented as a separate step that turns inputs into outputs.

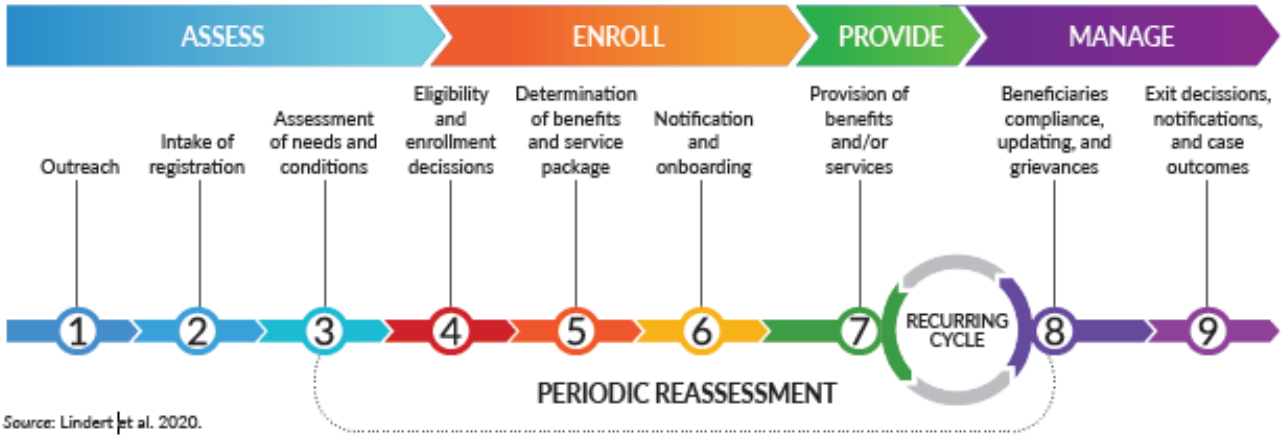
**To understand how investments result in policy outcomes, we need to pay close attention to *resources, inputs, and outputs*, together with the activities that convert one to the other.** These will guide us to the answers sought here, as to what investments have been made, how they have been used in emergency response, and their results. We can also use this framing to identify the explanatory factors that drive the costs and results, and to consider the forward-looking question of how these can be further improved. Together these give us a 'return on investment' story. The later stages of assessing outcomes and impact, for programmes that deliver transfers, could add to that story and could be assessed by means of post-distribution monitoring and/or impact evaluations of recipients' experience; but these tend to be influenced by a wider range of factors including some that are outside the control of the implementing entity, and are beyond the scope of this study (see section 4 below).

**Assessing the 'return on investment' is close to, but not the same as, assessing 'value for money'.** The latter not only looks at how well resources are used but also requires judgments about whether the resource use is justified, ideally when compared with possible alternatives; these value judgments are necessarily subjective and dependent on context (King, et al., 2023). We have aimed to take these broader considerations into account where feasible in the light of data obtained, and trying to draw on the criteria that the government itself uses, if identifiable, to judge what is good value for money. Their preferred measures of economy, efficiency or effectiveness might include e.g. increased coverage, reduced exclusion of certain target groups, more timely distribution of transfers, more sustainable funding, greater accountability, etc. (See e.g. King, 2023, or O'Brien *et al*., 2018, for other examples of types of return.)

**In the social protection sector, investments can be made at a systemwide level or within particular programmes.** Staff may be hired to manage multiple programmes, or just one; databases may be created for use by many programmes or be programme-specific. Moreover, the social protection system may itself draw on systems that cover multiple sectors, such as government-to-person (G2P) payment platforms or civil registration databases. We aim to consider these broader investments where possible, noting qualitatively the contribution of the investment if it is not realistic to apportion a share of the resource to the emergency response. We analyse the overall system architecture using the building blocks of a social protection system as outlined in WFP's social protection strategy, namely policies and legislation (section 5); governance, coordination and the workforce (section 6); planning and financing (section 7); and digital platforms and infrastructure (section 8) (WFP, 2021).

**At programme level, the delivery chain for cash transfer programmes articulated by the World Bank neatly summarises the activities that convert inputs (staff, vehicles, databases etc.) into outputs (households enrolled, recipients paid etc.)** (Figure 2). We apply this across the case studies to analyse the use of the investments (section 10 in this report).

**Figure 2 A 'delivery chain' for cash transfer programmes**




**Where data on costs are available, we aim to classify and analyse them using an established method for calculating the cost-efficiency of emergency cash transfer programmes** (O'Brien, 2014). In the case of the Philippines case study, detailed data on the cash grants distributed for the ECT programme in response to Super Typhoon Egay were obtained, yet detailed costing data relating to the human resources utilized as well as other relevant administrative costs were limited. The present study therefore concentrates on the description of actual and possible investments, with reference to detailed costs where known.

# 3 The Philippines: social protection response to Super Typhoon Egay

**Super Typhoon Egay (also known in other countries as Typhoon Doksuri) reached super typhoon status and made landfall in the north of the Philippines on 25 July 2023, and left the Philippine Area of Responsibility (PAR) two days later.** The flooding that it caused remained in some areas through to the time of the present research in March 2024, and interventions for recovery and rehabilitation had not yet been completed at that time. Moreover, Egay was immediately followed by another typhoon, Typhoon Falcon (internationally known as Typhoon Khanun), which crossed the PAR from 29 July to 1 August 2023. This exacerbated the monsoon rains and flooding, and impacted some of the same geographical areas.

**Some 3.6 million persons were affected by Super Typhoon Egay across 5,678 barangays (the smallest administrative unit) in 14 of the country's 17 regions, causing more than 600,000 individuals to be internally displaced and 30 deaths.** Northern regions were most heavily affected. Additionally, almost 100,000 houses were damaged (DSWD, 2024b). In the first two weeks after the typhoon, damages to the crop and fishery sectors equivalent to PHP 3.17 billion (USD 56.5 million) were recorded with a comparable amount of damages documented for the infrastructure sector (Argosino, 2023) ; (Reyes, 2023). The total eventual cost of the damage to the economy was estimated by the national meteorological agency, PAGASA, at over PHP 15 billion (PAGASA, 2024).

**It is instructive to draw out the successes and lessons from the national response to such typhoons, as regrettably they are by no means a rarity.** The country is at very high risk of natural hazards including severe storms, typhoons, floods, landslides, earthquakes, and volcanic activity, among others. Severe storms that turn into super typhoons are of exceptionally high concern: the Philippines is assessed to have the world's second highest exposure[2]. On average, 20 typhoons cross the PAR each year, of which about half make landfall, and they are increasing in intensity. In fact, even weaker typhoons are now accompanied by storm surges, heavy flooding, and landslides, with the result that the adverse conditions produced by the typhoon persist for months after the storm itself has passed. Typhoons typically impact nine of the 17 regions of the Philippines; over the past 10 years, they have affected an annual average of 5 million people (World Bank, 2022b). Climate change is expected to worsen these negative impacts. Advances in disaster risk management in the Philippines have generated a gradually declining trend in fatalities as a proportion of total casualties caused by typhoons over the last two decades, but nonetheless these storms still result in dozens or hundreds of deaths and injuries yearly, and the total annual cost of damage is steadily increasing.

[2] INFORM 2024 Risk Index. The Philippines scores 9.2 out of 10 on the INFORM Risk Index, which scores countries from 0-10 for each hazard type, on the basis of exposure to the hazard; it also assesses the extent to which the population is exposed, their vulnerability and coping capacity.

**National and subnational authorities implement several social protection programmes for disaster response, recovery, and rehabilitation, that deliver cash, vouchers, and in-kind assistance to affected households.** The ECT programme—an unconditional disaster intervention implemented by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) in the form of cash assistance—is one of the key schemes, along with others such as the Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation (AICS), the Emergency Shelter Assistance and Family Food Packs, all of which were implemented as part of the response to Egay.

**The expanded use of social protection is recognised nationally as an important area of action for disaster management.** This is detailed, for example, in the Philippines Development Plan (2023-2028), and the Enhanced Social Protection Framework (2019). To maximise the effectiveness and efficiency of this contribution, the overarching question to which the study seeks an answer—by means of the key research questions listed in Table 1 above—is therefore:

> **What have been the implications (both positive and negative) of using government social protection systems and programmes, especially the ECT Programme, as a vehicle for responding to Super Typhoon Egay in the Philippines, in terms of contributing to a cost-efficient, high quality response?**

# 4 Methodology

## 4.1 Scope of the research

**As per the approach in section 2, we focus on the value of social protection in response to Super Typhoon Egay in terms of inputs, administrative processes, and outputs.** It is, of course, also of interest to know its *impact* on mitigating the adverse effects of the typhoon on households. However, an impact evaluation is outside of the scope of this project and not covered by this study. The scope of our analysis covers the following:

- **We look at the response to Super Typhoon Egay from July 2023 to February 2024 where possible.** In many cases, local authorities track their resources separately for each disaster response, and it is feasible to determine expenditure on Egay alone; in other instances, data may refer also to Typhoon Falcon. We have indicated where this is the case.
- **At subnational level we have explored the response of Region I and Region III in more detail.** These are two of the most affected regions in Luzon, the northern part of the Philippines. In these regions, a total of 2.4 million individuals were affected across 2,906 barangays, equating to 65% of the entire affected population (DSWD, 2023c).
- **Investments in the broader social protection and DRM system were not confined to Egay alone**. Many investments have been proposed and/or introduced during and since the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly to improve the processes of assessment and enrolment of recipients, and delivery of transfers. These include developments that seek to enhance digitalisation of social assistance delivery. We review in particular the systems developed since 2020.

## 4.2 Fieldwork and analysis

**The research entailed primary quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis in the Philippines, and a literature review.** During an inception mission in February 2024, the team defined the study parameters, consulting with government counterparts. A stakeholder analysis was conducted to systematically identify the agencies and individuals implicated; from this a list of interviewees was drawn up. The main research took place over two weeks in March 2024.

**The thorough review of documentation and data has included (see Annex A):**

- Government policies, strategies, protocols and budgets for social protection and DRM
- Programme-specific documentation, including the ECT Operational Manual, its monitoring reports as well as its budgets
- The regular situation reports on the effects of Super Typhoon Egay, issued by the DSWD's Disaster Response Operations Monitoring and Information Center (DROMIC) between July and October 2023

- Strategies and studies by international and national agencies, non-governmental organisations, consultancy firms and academic institutions on the use of social protection in the response to typhoons, a subject in which international interest has been strong ever since the national system was used following Typhoon Haiyan in 2013.

**Primary research took place in Manila and two regions.** In Manila, the research comprised interviews in English with 36 key informants, from ministries and their departments, United Nations entities and multilateral organizations (see Annex B). At subnational level the team visited Ilocos (Region I) and Central Luzon (Region III), two regions in the north of the country. Within each, a province was selected for closer engagement, namely Pangasinan and Bulacan respectively. These were selected as they were among the provinces with the highest exposure to Super Typhoon Egay and therefore also incurred some of the highest expenses under the ECT programme. The team conducted interviews with 15 key informants from local authorities. Further quantitative data were obtained from respondents, where possible, on ECT budgets and expenditure.

**Two main limitations were encountered during the research process.** First is the limited availability of data on costs. While the research team obtained data on the total amount transferred to recipient households under the ECT, it was unable to gain financial data on the ECT's administrative costs. Nor was quantitative data available that could have permitted an estimation of the share of costs of investments that were made into broader national systems used by the ECT. Administrative costs may be able to be estimated in the event of future emergencies by tracking the time spent by the workforce of the DSWD and local authorities on delivering support, as well as vehicle usage and per diems for travel and overnight stays during assessment, enrolment, distribution of the transfer and programme management. For the present study the absence of this data means that we can describe qualitatively the investments at each stage of the delivery chain, but not their cost. Second, owing to constraints in availability of relevant personnel the team spoke to respondents at fewer provincial and municipal offices than originally intended. While the experiences of respondents were triangulated with one another, it is possible that other offices in the affected regions may have faced different challenges or adopted other innovative solutions in addition to the ones captured here.

# Part B. Resources, inputs and the policy environment

**As noted earlier, some key determinants of the value of social protection in emergency response—as with any policy issue—are the financial and human resources invested in it, together with the norms established in policies and legislation as to how they can be used.** We analyse here the policy environment, governance arrangements, funding flows and digital infrastructure that set the parameters for what was permissible and feasible for ECT implementers after Super Typhoon Egay.

## 5 How the policy framework promotes the use of social protection to address emergencies

**The Philippines has established a comprehensive social protection system** (Smith et al., 2017)**.** The lead agency on social protection, the DSWD, has been in place since the 1980s. Over the last two decades the government has, among other initiatives, formalised a definition of social protection; established and updated a sectoral operational framework and passed related laws; created and implemented the poverty alleviation programme, the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps), among others; approved the gradual implementation of the social protection floor; and established a social registry of the poor (Listahanan) along with a mandate for all agencies to use it[3]. These reforms have strengthened the perception of social protection as a key pillar to reduce poverty and vulnerability.

**'Shock-responsiveness' is increasingly a feature of the national social protection system, as shown by the Enhanced Social Protection Operational Framework, approved in 2019.** It outlines the importance of an integrated system that, "include[s] responses to structural as well as shock-related vulnerabilities and facilitates multi-stakeholder coordination and collaboration". It identifies major risks and vulnerabilities, including natural and human-induced disasters, and outlines what might be an adequate informal, government and private sector response. The framework speaks to i) the desirability of flexibility in the design of programmes to scale up, ii) the importance of information and data management systems for timely implementation, iii) the possibility of financing emergency responses through the social protection system, as well as iv) the sharing of delivery and implementation platforms with humanitarian agencies and disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM) institutions.

**Central to this development are several policy initiatives in social protection that aim to mitigate natural, health, and other human-induced hazards.** These include, among others:

[3] These laws included the Universal Health Care Act (Republic Act No. 11223), the 4Ps Act (Republic Act No. 11310), the Social Security Act (Republic Act No. 11199), the Philippine Identification System Act (Republic Act No. 11055), the Community-Based Monitoring System Act (Republic Act No. 11315), the Social Pension for Indigent Seniors Act (Republic Act No. 11916), and the Solo Parents Welfare Act (Republic Act No. 8972) (Aldaba, 2023).

- **the operationalization of the Adaptive Shock Responsive Roadmap**, adopted by the National DRRM Council (NDRRMC) through Resolution No. 7, series of 2021. It aims to "strengthen coordination mechanisms with inter-governmental agencies, raise the capacities of concerned institutions, and implement pilot testing of integrated social protection approaches from regular and ancillary programmes and services in selected areas around the country."
- **the development and implementation of anticipatory delivery mechanisms for highly probable disasters and emergencies** as recognized under NDRRMC Resolution No. 7, series of 2022**.** Using early warning mechanisms, including the projection of catastrophic impact, the government envisions the implementation of anticipatory mechanisms, including the prepositioning of funds and other resources, and shock-responsive social protection programmes to address emergencies so as to reduce the impact that these have on household income, assets and casualties.
- **the further strengthening of collaboration among the NDRRMC, the Climate Change Commission, local government units (LGUs), and the private and/or civil society sector**, as part of a 'whole-of-government' and 'whole-of-society' approach.

**The operational framework is supported by the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2023-2028, which aims to establish a transformative social protection system that empowers every Filipino to prevent, respond to, and recover from possible shocks.** It explicitly mentions, for the first time, the need to continuously address recurrent and new risks facing vulnerable sectors of the population and poor households through an adaptive and shock-responsive social protection system. Critical in this respect, too, is a universal and integrated social protection system that is characterised by improved efficiency and effectiveness.

**Meanwhile, social protection is also recognised in policies and legislation governing DRRM.** Since the 1970s, the Philippines has revised its legal foundations for DRRM, underlining response-centred interventions in addition to preparedness and mitigation efforts (UNDRR, 2019). The Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010, also known as the Republic Act (RA) No. 10121, has become the principal legal instrument guiding DRRM across several levels of governance. As a result, the Philippines has a relatively advanced system.

**RA No. 10121 gives a legal basis for the government to deliver assistance and services to people affected by disasters so as to "save lives, reduce health impacts, ensure public safety and meet the basic subsistence needs"** (Government of the Philippines, 2010)**.** Its provisions are in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Climate Agreement, the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response, and the national long-term vision document 'AmBisyon Natin 2040', among others. Furthermore, it is supported by the 2011 National DRRM Framework, operationalised through national and local DRRM Plans (NDRRMPs and LDRRMPs), and funded by the national and/or local DRRM Funds.

**The NDRRMP 2020-2030 recognizes the value of social protection in increasing the resilience of communities, and in particular the role of emergency cash transfers in disaster response and early recovery.** It lists social protection as one of eight outcomes to

prevent and mitigate disasters. Here, it highlights the importance of social protection in building (financial) resilience at all levels so as to ensure that communities have access to effective, responsive, and inclusive social protection, risk financing and insurance mechanisms. In this way it aligns its priorities with the PDP strategy on reducing vulnerability through risk transfer and providing universal and transformative social protection for all. Other policies, such as the National Climate Change Action Plan (2011-2028) and the Disaster Rehabilitation and Recovery Planning Guide (2020), take a similar perspective on the role of social protection.

**Policies become a reality when they are translated into practice by means of funded programmes; and the Philippines has several that operate at the interface of social protection and DRRM** (Table 2). Some, such as the ECT, are triggered in response to covariate shocks including typhoons. Others, such as Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation (AICS), can be provided to individuals in any type of crisis, of which a covariate shock might be one. Still others, such as the 4Ps, primarily provide longer term social protection but can be adjusted to accommodate additional needs if a disaster strikes.

## Table 2. Selected social protection programmes and their link to DRRM

| Key programmes | Description | Link to DRRM |
|---|---|---|
| **DSWD Disaster Risk Management programmes** | | |
| Emergency Cash Transfer Programme (ECT) | The ECT programme was adopted to deliver disaster response and early recovery in disaster-affected areas. It is the first unconditional disaster intervention implemented by DSWD in the form of cash. The amount depends on the regional daily minimum wage. A maximum of 90 days is payable. Beneficiaries can be all those affected by a disaster. | These are disaster risk management programmes by design. |
| Emergency Shelter Assistance (ESA) | ESA provides financial assistance amounting to PHP 10,000 to disaster-affected households with damaged houses. The list of beneficiaries is compiled by the affected LGUs and subsequently verified by the relevant DSWD Field Office. | |
| Emergency Subsidy Programme | Provided through various national and local government programmes, including AICS, SLP, the Social Pension for Indigent Senior Citizens and Supplementary Feeding Programme. The subsidy ranges between PHP 5,000 and PHP 8,000 per beneficiary per month for up to two months. Beneficiaries are low-income households affected by crises. | |
| **DSWD social welfare programmes and services** | | |
| Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation (AICS) | AICS provides financial assistance to families affected by idiosyncratic or covariate shocks and who are thereby unable to maintain living and/or other expenses. Psychosocial interventions and/or direct financial/material assistance enable affected individuals to meet their basic food, transportation, health, and education needs. | AICS provides disaster-affected households with immediate financial relief to allow them to meet their basic needs. |
| Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) | The 4Ps is the country's flagship social protection programme, which provides conditional cash transfers to poor households for a maximum of seven years with the aim to improve health, nutrition and education. Each month, beneficiary households receive PHP 750 as a health grant; an | Potential for vertical and horizontal expansion in preparation and response to crises in addition to the |

| Key programmes | Description | Link to DRRM |
|---|---|---|
| | education grant of PHP 300 to 700 depending on the grade attended by the child (up to three children per household, for 10 months a year); and a rice subsidy equivalent to PHP 600. | waiving of conditionalities. |
| Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP) | This social protection programme aims to build the capacity of poor, vulnerable and marginalized individuals and communities through technical-vocational and life skills training courses, membership and participation in SLP associations, provision of seed capital, access to credit and savings facilities, as well as acquiring physical assets. | Provides a one-time Livelihood Assistance Grant of PHP 15,000 to its beneficiaries that are affected by idiosyncratic and covariate shocks. |
| Kapit-Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan-Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services (KALAHI-CIDSS) | KALAHI-CIDSS is a community empowerment and poverty alleviation programme. Grants are provided to local communities, who are then responsible for project selection, the procurement of goods and services, and the operation and maintenance of physical assets. | DSWD has developed procedures for this programme to waive or modify its activities and sub-activities in an emergency. |
| **Programmes implemented by other agencies** | | |
| National Housing Authority: Emergency Housing Assistance Program | This provides construction materials or PHP 10,000 to marginal-income households with partially damaged houses and PHP 30,000 to those with totally damaged houses in the aftermath of a disaster. | These are disaster risk management programmes by design. |
| Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE): Emergency Employment Program (Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa Ating Disadvantaged/ Workers, TUPAD) | TUPAD is an emergency employment programme that provides temporary wage employment for 10–90 days to disadvantaged workers, being those who work in the informal sector, are marginalised or are displaced by disasters including natural calamities or armed conflict. After a disaster, participants may be engaged to e.g. clear roads, canals and rivers, sort debris, recover materials, make minor repairs to community buildings, or assist LGUs in the delivery of basic goods. | |

Source: (Nineteenth Congress of the Republic of the Philippines, 2023); (Raymundo Jr., 2022); DOLE, 2023; DSWD, 2020a, 2020b; DSWD n.d. a,b,c,d,e.

**Among these, the ECT has perhaps the greatest visibility among international actors as a disaster response programme.** This arises in part from its origins, as it emerged from experiences under the Emergency Cash Transfer programmes piloted by WFP and UNICEF in the response and recovery phases for Typhoon Haiyan in 2013. Conversations and activities between the government and its international partners led to the design and subsequent adoption of the ECT as a national programme in 2020 (Box 1).

### Box 1. Overview of the ECT Programme

In January 2020, the DSWD's ECT programme was adopted as a modality to deliver disaster response and early recovery in disaster-affected areas. It is the first unconditional disaster intervention implemented by DSWD in the form of cash assistance; thereby shifting focus from the provision of purely food and non-food items. To provide DSWD with the authority to implement the ECT, a Memorandum Circular (MC) No. 03, Series of 2020 was issued.

Upon the declaration of a state of calamity, the ECT is activated by the DSWD Secretary or a designated representative. Depending on the scale and frequency of disasters, the ECT can be implemented simultaneously in different areas, and/or over a period of time if a series of disasters have occurred. The ECT complements existing cash transfers provided to disaster-affected families, including the ESA, Cash-for-Work, Cash-for-Training, Cash-for-Caring, AICS, and sustainable livelihood support.

Source: (DSWD, 2022)

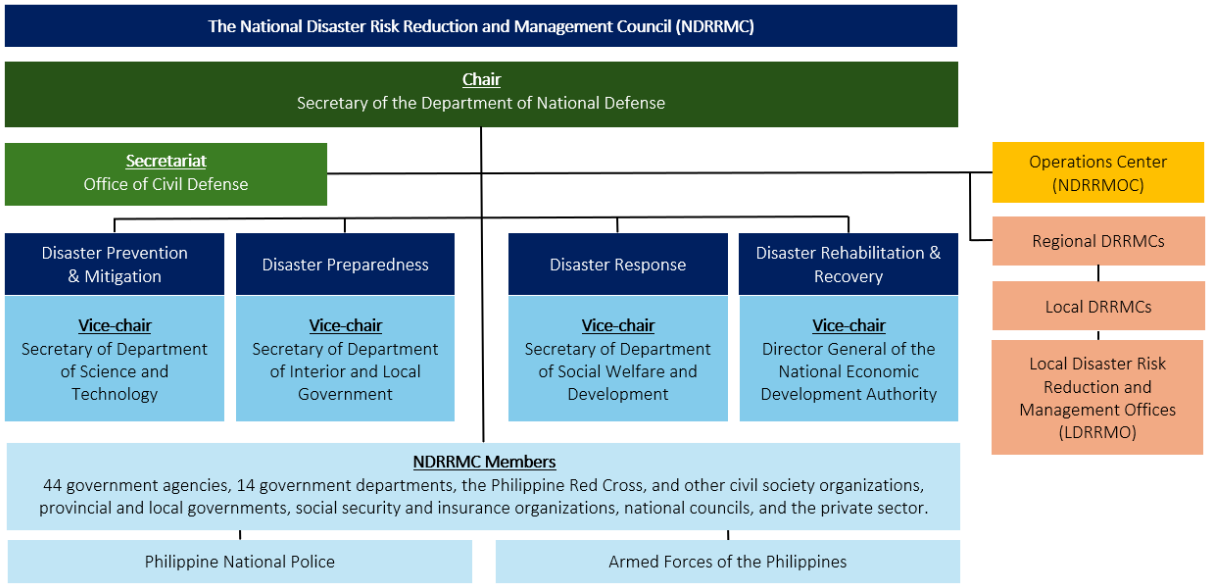
**While the full set of programmes in Table 2 are quite complementary to the ECT, the nature of that complementarity is not always consistently stated.** Improved coordination and alignment of programme design—including a consistent approach to adjustments in crises, and the availability of data-sharing agreements—could potentially generate savings and efficiency gains. For instance, the KALAHI-CIDSS community development programme has long had a 'Disaster Response Operations Modality' that shifts operations to a new, streamlined mode during emergencies, allowing for waived local contributions, reprioritisation of resources, redeployment of staff, etc.; the modality was implemented nationwide during COVID-19. But other programmes do not have equivalent provisions on how interventions are to be adjusted, nor how they are to be aligned and coordinated within and across departments, such as whether households receiving one programme should be included or excluded from others. Furthermore, at sub-national level, local authorities have self-governing authority and can implement their own programmes; these, too, might benefit from closer coordination with regional and national programmes. The system as a whole could benefit from greater clarity in this regard, to improve coherence and consistency[4].

[4] The raft of DSWD Memorandum Circulars that either pertain to social protection in an emergency, or that could benefit from closer integration with related documents, includes circulars no. 4 and no. 6 (2024); nos. 7, 9, 16 and 20 (2023); nos. 2, 4 and 13 (2021); and nos. 17 and 35 (2020).

# 6 Governance, coordination and the workforce: an important role for Local Government Units

**Primary responsibility for policy-making, coordination and supervision of DRRM activities falls to the NDRRMC.** This multisectoral body, administered by the Department of National Defense, is chaired by the secretary of that department; four vice-chairs from different departments each manage one pillar of DRRM—prevention and mitigation, preparedness, response, and rehabilitation and recovery—and several dozen members across government and beyond complete the council (Figure 3). The NDRRMC takes the lead in approving, implementing and managing the National DRRM Plan, and in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from the effects of any disaster when two or more regions are affected.

## Figure 3 Organizational structure of the NDRRMC




Source: Authors.

**Anything on a smaller scale is coordinated and led by equivalent sub-national structures.** DRRM Councils (DRRMCs) exist in every region (Regional DRRMCs), province, city / municipality, and barangay (Local DRRMCs)[5]. The RDRRMCs, chaired by the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) and whose vice-chairs are regional directors of the four lead line ministries, guarantee the development of disaster-sensitive regional development plans. During disasters, they assemble the regional line agencies and concerned authorities. They lead activities when two or more provinces are affected by a disaster. In the context of disaster response, they provide support functions to the affected LGUs. This includes coordinating the transition from immediate emergency response operations to early recovery functions undertaken by government

[5] If solely one barangay is affected, the Barangay Development Council leads activities; if two or more, then the city/municipality DRRMCs are in charge. Lastly, if two or more cities or municipalities are affected, n the provincial DRRMCs take the lead.

agencies and the cluster system. Furthermore, they coordinate, integrate, supervise, and evaluate the activities of the LDRRMCs. LDRRMCs are chaired and/or coordinated by their respective local chief executives (Government of the Philippines, 2010). The pre- and post-disaster activities they implement can include risk and post-disaster needs assessments; the training and supervision of local emergency response teams; the provision of relief items and shelter; the implementation of ESA and AICS; and planning around implementation of the ECT.

**Throughout the levels the central role of the DSWD is affirmed** (OCD, 2020)**.** Among the four pillars of DRRM, DSWD leads disaster response and thus is one of the vice-chairs, while also having responsibilities across the other three pillars (Figure 3). The linkage between DRRM and the social protection sector is strengthened by the existence of a dedicated bureau in DSWD for disaster response: the Disaster Response Management Bureau (DRMB). It coordinates agencies nationally and sub-nationally, and runs the ECT programme. DRMB is supported by other offices within DSWD including the 4Ps National Program Management Office, the National Household Targeting Office and Finance and Management Service.

**DSWD also leads social protection and social welfare activities, and coordinates three clusters in the national cluster system for disaster response coordination.** As a result of these cross-sectoral responsibilities, social protection programmes are capable of and have responded to disasters in the Philippines (Brown, 2015).

**DSWD has a field office in every region**. Within each, a specific organizational structure is followed (DSWD, 2018). Each field office is headed by a regional director, supported by assistant regional directors for operations and for administration. Under these are seven divisions, including the disaster response management division. It is tasked with planning, coordinating and monitoring all disaster response activities, including providing augmentation support to LGUs in the form of relief, rehabilitation, and recovery services. Specific activities include the implementation of the ECT, which requires DSWD field offices to conduct verification activities of the LGU-submitted beneficiaries, as well as a rapid assessment of the situation and the needs of affected individuals, and to authorize DSWD staff to be Special Disbursing Officers (SDOs) who are responsible for the distribution and reconciliation of the ECT cash transfers.

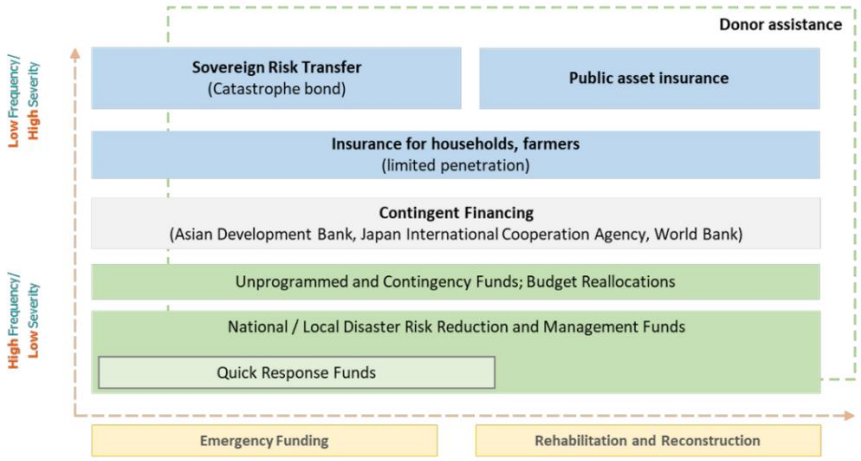
**LGUs, the lowest level of local administration, are autonomous units, not subordinate to the national government.** With the principle of decentralisation having been enshrined in the constitution since 1987, they have their own powers and budget. Their responsibilities include providing aid to people in need, and in this regard, they have a crucial—and increasing—role in disasters, being geographically closest to affected populations when a disaster strikes.

**A recent Supreme Court ruling, known as the Mandanas Ruling, has radically altered the governance arrangements for many government functions by revising the share of national taxes that are released automatically to LGUs.** Executive Order No.138, s.2021 aims to strengthen the autonomy and empowerment of LGUs by directing the full devolution of certain functions of the Executive Branch to the local levels. These also include some of DSWD's programmes. For example, the AICS has already become a shared responsibility with LGUs. Whether this will also be the case for the ECT is still to be determined.

# 7 Financing of disaster response, and allocations to social protection

**Disaster response programmes are funded partly by pre-allocated budgets, and partly through requests for support during the year.** With the adoption of the National Disaster Risk Financing and Insurance Strategy in 2015, the Government achieved a key milestone towards improving financial planning for disasters (World Bank, 2020)[6]. To deliver its goals, the government has expanded its portfolio of risk retention and risk transfer instruments. These include dedicated disaster funds, contingency financing and parametric insurance (Figure 4).

## Figure 4 The Philippines' portfolio of disaster risk financing instruments



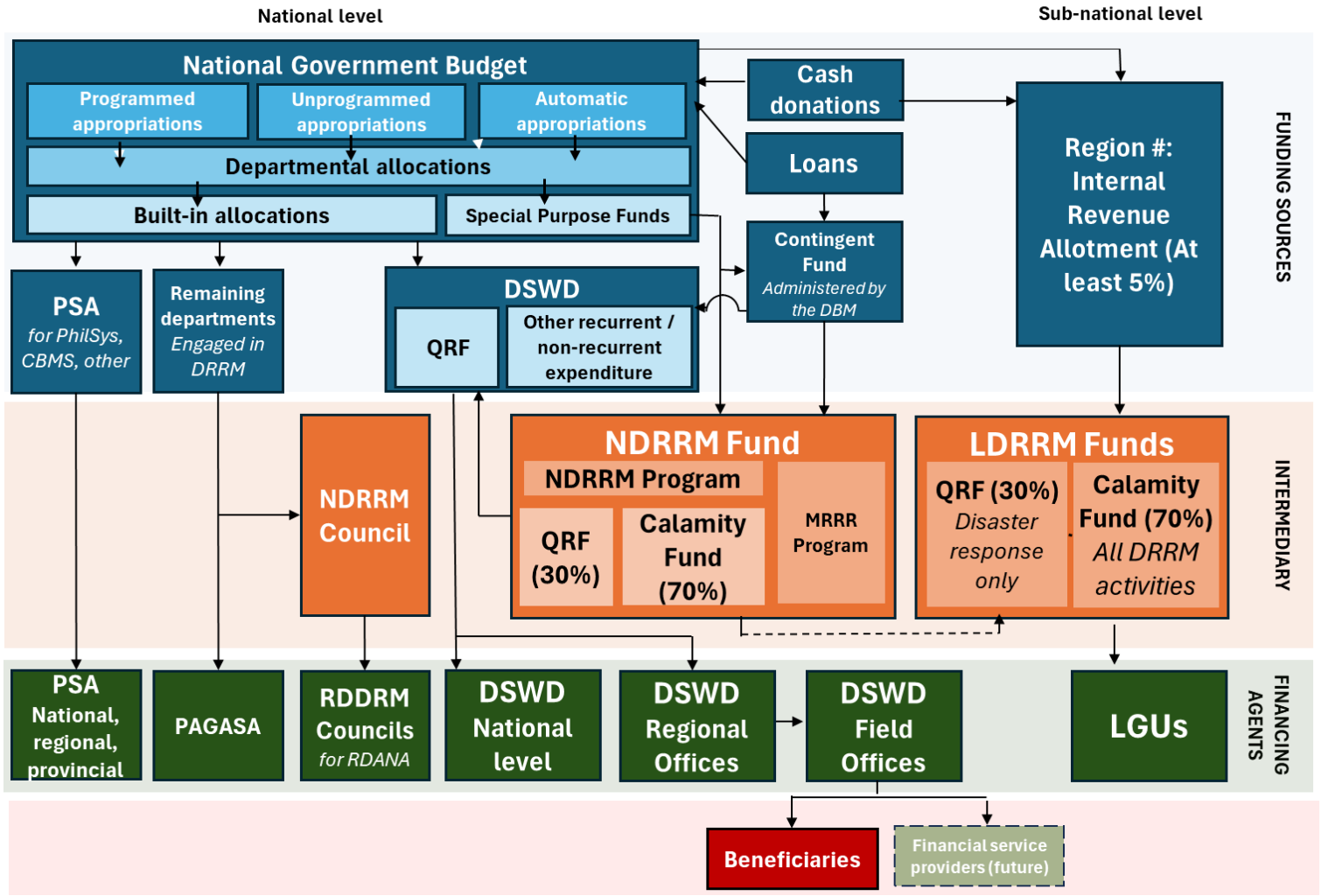

Source: World Bank (2020).

**Consequently, several financing sources are now available for disaster response**. Among the most commonly used for the ECT are the Quick Response Funds (QRFs), National and Local DRRM Funds (NDRRMF and LDRRMFs), and supplemental funds including budget reallocations. These are supported as necessary by cash donations and funds from multilateral and bilateral sources, though predominantly, disaster response in the Philippines is financed by the government instead of through international assistance (DSWD, 2022b). The declaration of a state of calamity is a vital step, as it mandates government agencies to use post-disaster financing instruments.

**The ECT does not currently have its own budget line, but draws on those instruments** (Figure 5). The use of the funds is sequenced: the DSWD must first start using its own QRF, before it can reach out to the NDRRM Fund to request a top-up from its QRF, before turning to the NDRRM Fund's Calamity Fund if other sources are depleted. We look here at how each works, and the implications for an efficient and effective disaster response.

[6] Key aims include sound fiscal health to support long-term reconstruction; developing sustainable financing mechanisms for LGUs to cover instant disaster-related expenses; and reducing the impact of disasters on the poor and most vulnerable.

## Figure 5 Financing pathways of the ECT Programme




Source: Authors, based on information from literature and key informants. Note: 'Financing agents' are those who use the money.

## 7.1 Quick Response Funds

**The QRFs are stand-by funds used to cover relief and rehabilitation activities in the aftermath of a disaster.** Selected first line responder agencies are pre-allocated a QRF based on historical allocations and national priorities (Table 3). Amounts are automatically transferred with the annual approval of the General Appropriations Act (GAA) of the Philippines, the legislation that defines government expenditure. Immediate post-disaster assistance to affected communities is ensured once a state of calamity has been declared as the allocated budget can be used without further approval by the Office of the President or the NDRRMC.

**Table 3. QRF allocation 2023 and 2024, by department**

| Department | 2023 | | 2024 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Amount (PHP million)* | *Share (%)* | *Amount (PHP million)* | *Share (%)* |
| Public Works & Highways - Office of the Secretary | 11,000 | 64.1 | 1,000 | 12.6 |
| Education - Office of the Secretary | 2,000 | 11.7 | 3,000 | 37.9 |
| DSWD - Office of the Secretary | 1,750 | 10.2 | 1,750 | 22.1 |
| Agriculture - Office of the Secretary | 1,000 | 5.8 | 1,000 | 12.6 |
| Health - Office of the Secretary | 500 | 2.9 | 500 | 6.3 |
| National Defense - Office of Civil Defense | 500 | 2.9 | 500 | 6.3 |
| BSGC – National Irrigation Authority | 300 | 1.8 | - | - |
| Interior & Local Government - Bureau of Fire Protection | 50 | 0.3 | 50 | 0.6 |
| Interior & Local Government - Philippine National Police | 50 | 0.3 | 50 | 0.6 |
| Transportation - Philippine Coast Guard | - | - | 75 | 1.0 |
| Total | 17,150 | 100 | 7,925 | 100 |

Source: Office of the President of the Philippines (2023, 2024). Note: Other departments can request QRF allocations for a specific year, besides those who receive it automatically. See e.g. the allocation to the Department of Transportation in 2024.

**The DSWD is one of the selected agencies entitled to an annual allocation**. Its use is subject to special conditions set out in the GAA, defined annually. For DSWD, the 2023 allocation could not be used for activities implemented prior to a disaster (e.g., training, insurance of assets, and public information and education initiatives), but instead was to be utilized to provide post-disaster assistance to affected individuals through "rehabilitation and relief programs, including the prepositioning of goods and equipment, in order that the situation and living conditions of people in communities or areas affected by natural or human-induced calamities, epidemics, crises, and catastrophes which occurred in the last quarter of the immediately preceding year and those occurring during the current year may be normalized as quickly as possible."

**In 2023 and 2024, DSWD's QRF was allocated as shown in Table 4.** It can be used for recurrent expenditure, but does not include salaries, which are funded from the DSWD's regular budget. The QRF is the source of funding for the ECT transfers to households, drawn from the line for 'Subsidies and goods expenses': the programme does not have a dedicated budget line

within this. Historically, the actual utilization of the QRF lies below its obligations. For example, under the 2022 QRF, only roughly 86% was disbursed (DSWD, 2023a).

**Table 4. DSWD's QRF allocation 2023 and 2024, by category**

| MOOE categories | Specific expense categories | 2023 | 2024 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | *Amount (PHP million)* | *Amount (PHP million)* |
| Subsidies and goods expenses | Subsidies | 1,127.0 | 1,021.9 |
| | Welfare goods | 500.0 | 485.9 |
| Logistics expenses | Local travelling expenses | 20.0 | 27.8 |
| | Motor vehicle rent | 20.0 | 1.8 |
| | Fuel, oil and lubricants | 2.0 | 1.0 |
| | Transportation and delivery | 20.0 | 120.0 |
| Supplies, equipment and building expenses | Office supplies | 0.5 | 1.0 |
| | Medical, dental and laboratory supplies | 1.0 | - |
| | Other supplies and materials | 30.0 | 5.0 |
| | Buildings and structures rent | 20.0 | 60.0 |
| | Equipment rent | 1.0 | - |
| Utility expenses | Water | 0.3 | 0.2 |
| | Electricity | 0.1 | 0.2 |
| Telecommunication expenses | Mobile | 0.1 | 0.2 |
| | Landline | 0.1 | 0.2 |
| | Cable, satellite, telegraph and radio | 2.0 | 5.0 |
| Other expenses | Other maintenance and operating expenses | 5.0 | 10.7 |
| | Representation expenses | 1.0 | 3.2 |
| | Taxes, duties and licenses | 0.2 | 2.0 |
| | Printing and publication | - | 4.0 |
| Total expenses | | 1,750.0 | 1,750.0 |

Source: Office of the President of the Philippines (2023, 2024).

## 7.2 NDRRM Fund

**The NDRRM Fund is a dedicated source of additional funding to national government agencies for aid, relief, reconstruction and rehabilitation services**. In 2023, the total national budget of the Philippines amounted to PHP 5.3 trillion (USD 94.7 billion). Of this amount, PHP 20.5 billion was allocated to the NDRRM Fund, which was added to the balance left from the previous year to make a larger fund available (DoF, 2023b; GAA 2023). Some 30% of the total is reserved for the augmentation of the QRFs pre-allocated to agencies. The remainder is placed into a Calamity Fund, which also acts as the source of DRRM funding for agencies who do not automatically get a QRF allocation. Although the Philippines faces a multitude of disasters annually, the NDRRM Fund has never been depleted, owing to barriers in spending rules or difficulties created by expenditure controls. In 2022, solely 64% of the total

NDRRM Fund was used (COA, 2022). Disaggregated by agency, DSWD utilized 79% of the PHP 4.6 billion available to it—ranking it 12th in terms of its utilization rate, out of the 20 national government agencies that were allocated funds (COA, 2022).

### QRF replenishment

**Once a department has spent 50% of its pre-allocated QRF funding, it may request replenishment from the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) to ensure continuity of its disaster response activities.** Upon approval, the replenishment is financed from the NDRRM Fund. While RA No. 10121 limits the allocation for QRF replenishment to 30% of the NDRRM Fund, a recent Department of Justice opinion (October 2023) advised that this should be seen as a minimum allotment as, "the law will become futile and ineffective for its avowed purposes and intentions when needed assistance for people in disaster in the affected areas are left to fund for themselves by reason of restrictive application of the provision of the law." The DBM has asked for guidance from the NDRRMC on this.

### Calamity Fund

**The Calamity Fund covers disaster risk reduction, mitigation, prevention, and preparedness activities.** It can also be utilized for relief and recovery work for disasters that occurred during the budget year or within the two preceding years. Agencies may request funds from the Calamity Fund when, for example, the 30% allocated to the NDRRMF for QRF augmentation is depleted or if other parts of national or local government require funds for disaster response. Requests are sent to the OCD, which provides a recommendation to the NDRRMC, which then makes a recommendation to the Office of the President. Approval can take a month or more. If approved, the Office advises the DBM to release the funds within 15 days (DBM, 2023b). The receiving department must submit quarterly utilization reports.

## 7.3 LDRRM Fund

**Similar to the NDRRM Fund, the LDRRM Fund is the main source of disaster financing at the sub-national level.** LGUs are obliged to allocate at least 5% of the estimated revenue from regular sources towards the LDRRM Fund, to support local DRRM activities within their own LGU or other LGUs that are declared a state of calamity. In 2022, a total of PHP 43.8 billion across all LDRRM Funds of the 1,517 LGUs was aggregated. As with the equivalent fund at national level, 30% of the LDRRM Fund is allocated as a QRF for disaster response, while the remainder is used to support the full range of DRRM activities (The Global Disaster Preparedness Center, 2013); DBM, 2013). In 2022, the average utilization rate across the LDRRM Funds was just under 50% (COA, 2022). Unused appropriations are transferred to a Special Trust Fund of the LGU used solely to support DRRM activities. If at the end of five years, the special trust fund has unused allocations, these will be reverted to the LGU's general budget.

## 7.4 Cash donations, grants and loans

**Although the government relies on its own resources, it may request and/or accept international assistance if insufficient funds are present.** Supported by Section 5 of the

GAA, government agencies, including LGUs, are authorized to accept cash donations—equivalent to general budget support—for purposes that are relevant to their functions. If such donations originate from foreign governments, however, acceptance thereof requires prior clearance and approval by the Philippine president based on the recommendation of the Secretary of Finance. The receipt of cash donations as well as the proceeds originating from the sale of donated commodities are to be deposited with the National Treasury and recorded as a Special Account under the General Fund of the National Treasury. These are then allocated to the budget of an implementing agency by way of a Special Budget; yet according to key informants, this may take at least three months.

**In times of disaster, cash donations may be a part of the international humanitarian assistance received by the Philippines, guided by the accounting and reporting guidelines of the Philippines International Humanitarian Assistance Cluster and monitored by the NDRRMC.** The NDRRMC Memorandum Circular No. 158 of 2017 outlines the conditions under which government departments and agencies at national and sub-national levels are allowed to receive such donations. DSWD, as vice-chair of the response pillar, is responsible for coordinating with the cluster the facilitation of internal and external donor capacities, facilitating the release of received donations, identifying beneficiaries, allocating resources, and reporting on the distribution. As a result, cash donations may directly be transferred to the DSWD in coordination with the NDRRMC and do not require approval by the President. Quarterly reports on the amounts received and their utilization must be submitted by the recipient department or agency to the Commission of Audit (COA), which is mandated to ensure accountability for public resources, promoting transparency. DSWD reportedly had a balance of PHP 124.6 million in cash donations at the beginning of 2022, of which they drew on solely 3% by the end of that year; sub-national donations amounted to roughly PHP 8.1 billion, yet only 54% were utilized (COA, 2022).

**The government may also receive loans and grants from multilateral or bilateral sources, such as from foreign governments or multilateral creditors.** Unlike cash donations, these are provided for a specific purpose and contain specific terms and conditions. Examples include the country's access to contingent credit and climate finance from the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (UNICEF, 2023). Most recently, the World Bank has approved the Philippines Disaster Risk Management and Climate Development Policy Loan with a Catastrophe Deferred Drawdown Option, which sets aside USD 500 million that the government can rapidly draw upon when major natural and/or health crises hit (World Bank, 2023). According to the ECT Operational Manual, the programme is part of the policy indicators of the Catastrophic Drawdown Option. Similarly, the Asian Development Bank launched its first pilot disaster insurance scheme in the Philippines and also approved a multiyear USD 500 million disaster contingent loan in 2020, while also having budgeted USD 10 billion in climate finance for the Philippines between 2024 and 2029 (ADB, 2020, 2023). Even if this and other climate finance options are not directly utilized on the ECT, they may free up funds in other areas that can.

## 7.5 Implications of the funding arrangements for social protection's role in disaster response

**Many aspects of these arrangements lend themselves well to the context of frequent rapid-onset disasters.** The presence of a QRF pre-allocated to DSWD, together with the NDRRM and LDRRM Funds as well as standby funds, is essential for responding in a timely manner. By distinguishing between QRFs and the Calamity Fund, the country ensures that financing is available not only for disaster response (the QRF) but all aspects of disaster management, including for disaster preparedness, rehabilitation, reconstruction and recovery.

**To maximise its impact, financing must be not only sufficient but also accessible at the right time and able to be used for the necessary purposes.** With the increasing magnitude and prevalence of disasters and the impact of climate change, respondents highlighted the need to advocate for increasing the amount of money that is allocated towards the NDRRM and LDRRM Funds under the GAA, and for allocating a regular budget to the ECT. The government is also considering looking into reforming public financial management and/or using market-based instruments and innovative financing mechanisms, such as climate finance, debt-for-development swaps, sustainability bonds or insurance.

**As for the timeliness, the sequential allocation of funding from different sources ensures that resources are not used up too fast, but with the trade-off that it can introduce delays and expose departments to competition for funds from other equally deserving causes.** An affected locality cannot service all its affected population at once, but must prioritize those most in need, with further tranches distributed later to households that have not yet received the ECT. In the response to Egay, DSWD did not receive the requested replenishment of its QRF given the competing priorities of other departments in response to the same disaster, so it had to request additional assistance through the slower route of the Calamity Fund. It was eventually successful, but in the meantime used funding earmarked for the AICS to cover the ECT. Other standby funds were used to bridge the gap between the end of the 2023 financial year and the start of 2024.

**Some innovations are sought or planned that may help speed up the administrative processes of the ECT and also the receipt of funds by the beneficiary household.** Regarding the former, key informants noted the potential efficiency to be gained by slightly adjusting the standards of compliance with COA regulations in times of disaster. This might include adaptations to some of its most important legal instruments, such as those relating to the need to provide valid identity documents or other authorization letters, or certificates of discrepancy in the event that a name is mis-spelled on the ECT payroll[7].

**To speed up the receipt of aid by households, the Government of the Philippines is willing to invest in 'anticipatory action' pilots, by which transfers can be made before a typhoon has struck.** The approach holds great potential for the Philippines, especially given

[7] See, for example, the COA's circulars regarding the utilization and liquidation of cash advances; documentary requirements for common government transactions; and the reimbursement of expenses not requiring official receipts.

improvements in PAGASA's forecasting and early warning systems. In an agreement with UNICEF, the DSWD is piloting the delivery of cash three days before the predicted landfall of a Category 4 typhoon, to help households prepare for the disaster, such as by protecting their assets, securing their house or evacuating the area, mitigating the scale of the disaster (UNICEF, 2022). The pilot complements nearly 200 anticipatory action interventions that were being implemented by 32 organizations as of August 2023 in over 100 municipalities / cities (UN OCHA, 2023). A House Bill has been filed in Congress in 2024 which, if approved, would lay the legislative foundation for anticipatory action to be included into the Philippines' DRRM Framework, thereby allowing government agencies to access funds prior to the declaration of a state of calamity (WFP, 2024b).

**Despite all the concerns about insufficient funding, there remains the issue of low budget execution even for current funds.** An Executive Order issued in 2023 directs all departments, to adopt and implement the Integrated Financial Management Information System so as to ensure the complete digitalization of public financial management processes. It is hoped that this will improve utilisation rates, including for all aspects of DRRM.

# 8 Digitalisation: a national investment beyond social protection

**The COVID-19 pandemic and the need for social distancing accelerated the government's focus on digitalising its economy.** Since 2020 a suite of national policy documents, executive orders and roadmaps have promoted financial inclusion and digital payments through more innovative and responsive digital financial services, and improvements to the systems already in place, while ensuring their adoption by all relevant parts of government (BSP, 2020; Congress of the Philippines, 2022; DBM, 2023a; NEDA, 2023; President of the Philippines, 2023). Aims include the creation of a digital single national identification system in addition to an integrated social protection management information system (MIS) and a digital payment infrastructure.

**The reach of these investments extends far beyond the social protection sector, and they have the potential to impact all of the DSWD's programmes across the delivery chain from assessment to enrolment, payment and management.** The extent to which they will result in efficiencies for the ECT depends on how much the DSWD incorporates them into its processes. We summarise briefly some of the investments and their status at the time of Egay.

## 8.1 Implementation of the Philippine Identification System

**In 2018, the Republic Act No. 11055, also known as the Philippine Identification System (PhilSys) Act, was signed into law.** The aim is to establish a digital single national identification system for all citizens and residents (NEDA, n.d.). Implementation started in 2021, and nearly 85 million people had been registered for the PhilID by March 2024 (PSA, 2024a). This provides a great opportunity as it allows each individual to have a unique identifier (the randomly generated PhilSys Number). This is of importance when establishing individual-level databases, such as the Community-Based Monitoring System (CBMS), as it simplifies identification and verification procedures, ensures that assistance is provided to the correct individual, and makes it easier to integrate programmes by linking information across databases.

## 8.2 Vulnerability assessments: the Listahanan and the CBMS

**A national registry of households, the National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction—popularly known as Listahanan—was piloted by DSWD from 2007 and launched in 2010, to identify eligible recipients of the 4Ps programme.** It collects data through a nationwide house-to-house survey every four years and has since been intended as the primary reference for the identification of possible beneficiaries of social protection programmes. By the time of its second iteration it already contained data on about 15 million households, of which 5.2 million had been classified as poor (Velarde, 2018). The latest data for Listahanan 3 was collected in 2020 (Rahbari, 2023).

**Meanwhile, in 2019, Republic Act No. 11315, known as the Community Based Monitoring System (CBMS) Act, introduced an alternative source of household-level data.** The CBMS is a technology-based system for collecting data for use in programming, which entails a census

of households undertaken by LGUs with the participation of the community (Congress of the Philippines, 2019). A transition from the Listahanan database to the CBMS has commenced with the aim of empowering local communities and granting them greater control over data collection (DSWD, 2024a). Data collection silos between the two systems were set to be resolved as the Listahanan would no longer be updated with, instead, the CBMS becoming the main instrument to generate data as a basis for targeting national programmes geared to poverty reduction and economic development (Government of the Philippines, 2024) [8]. At the time of Egay, however, the Listahanan had not been updated for some years while the CBMS had not yet been fully rolled out; and the transfer of responsibility for assessments from central to local authorities had not been fully specified. The uncertainty had ramifications for the use of both databases to identify eligible households for assistance under the ECT (see section 9).

**The plan just for setting up the CBMS platform in the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) gives a sense of the scale and complexity of the investment** (PSA, 2022). To run the service, the PSA was required to establish a Community-Based Statistics Service with divisions for planning, statistical analysis and geospatial data, staffed by a director, 10 regular personnel and 22 contractors. It needed an information system able to collect data submitted by interviewers, online or by telephone; and modules for data processing and geospatial data. It proposed to establish a CBMS National Databank as the repository of all microdata in multiple formats, with backups and archiving facilities, and local databases in LGUs. A pilot project was planned, with costs for pre-testing and piloting the instruments, along with consultations and training. Finally, a capital outlay was estimated at PHP 428 million (around USD 9 million) for over 3,700 computers and 100 servers nationwide, and other expenses. This does not even include the cost of recruiting LGU-level statisticians, or the time of staff in the DSWD and other agencies.

## 8.3 Digitalisation of payments

**The Philippines has transformed its digital payment landscape fast over the last decade.** While in 2013 only 1% of payments by volume were digital, by 2020 the proportion had reached 20%, and by 2023 it stood at 50% (WFP, 2024a). National executive orders, strategies and roadmaps for reform now mandate government entities at national and local level to adopt digital payments for their transactions, while recognising the need for a transition period (President of the Philippines, 2022).

**However, the use of bank accounts and smartphones among the population is uneven.** Some 44% of the population has no bank account; moreover, poorer households, who may be the target of social assistance programmes such as the ECT, tend to be less likely than the non-poor to live in areas with mobile network coverage, and also less likely to own a smartphone with digital payment apps (WFP, 2024). For this reason, for Super Typhoon Egay, the ECT took the form of cash distributed manually.

[8] However, it is expected that the current Listahanan database will be maintained by the DSWD as evidenced by its PHP 100 million allocation for the Listahanan system maintenance under the 2024 GAA.

## 8.4 How the digitalisation agenda is being applied to social protection

**The Secretary of DSWD recognizes the importance of digitalising aspects of the social protection system, especially to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of disaster response programmes.** An integrated social protection MIS and digital payment infrastructure are widely recognised by key informants as being paramount to achieving this.

**In 2020 DSWD, with funding from the World Bank, launched the Beneficiary Fast, Innovative, and Responsive Service Transformation Social Protection Project with the aim to achieve more efficient delivery systems.** This includes digital data governance and digital payments, including bank accounts or e-money accounts for 4Ps beneficiaries. Systems that were to be designed and implemented included i) an electronic case management system, ii) an integrated grievance redress system, intended for use by 4Ps and two other programmes, iii) a unified beneficiary database, iv) the modification of the enumeration system and the integration of CBMS and Listahanan variables so as to have a Standardized Targeting System, v) DSWD's medium-term digital transformation strategy, and vi) the enhancement of an MIS for the ECT, the precise form of which is under review (World Bank, 2024).

**In June 2020, a memorandum of agreement was signed between DSWD, the Lank Bank of the Philippines, and six financial service providers for the digital payment of the second tranche of the Social Amelioration Program's emergency subsidy program, a cash transfer scheme created as a response to COVID-19** (De Layola, 2023); (PhilSys, 2021); (Luci-Atienza, 2020); (World Bank, 2022)**.** This paved the way to providing proof of concept of the feasibility of 'caravan'-style processes, whereby the bank moves from one location to the next to provide services. This has been tested for both 'caravan registration', where the bank travels between towns and villages opening bank accounts at a cost of PHP 1 per family; and digital payments, distributing cash using a mobile ATM. The general agreement on this with the Land Bank of the Philippines as the main partner potentially covers other social protection programmes, including the ECT. At the time of the study, Regions III, V and NCR were due to pilot the rollout of the digital/caravan system for the AICS programme.

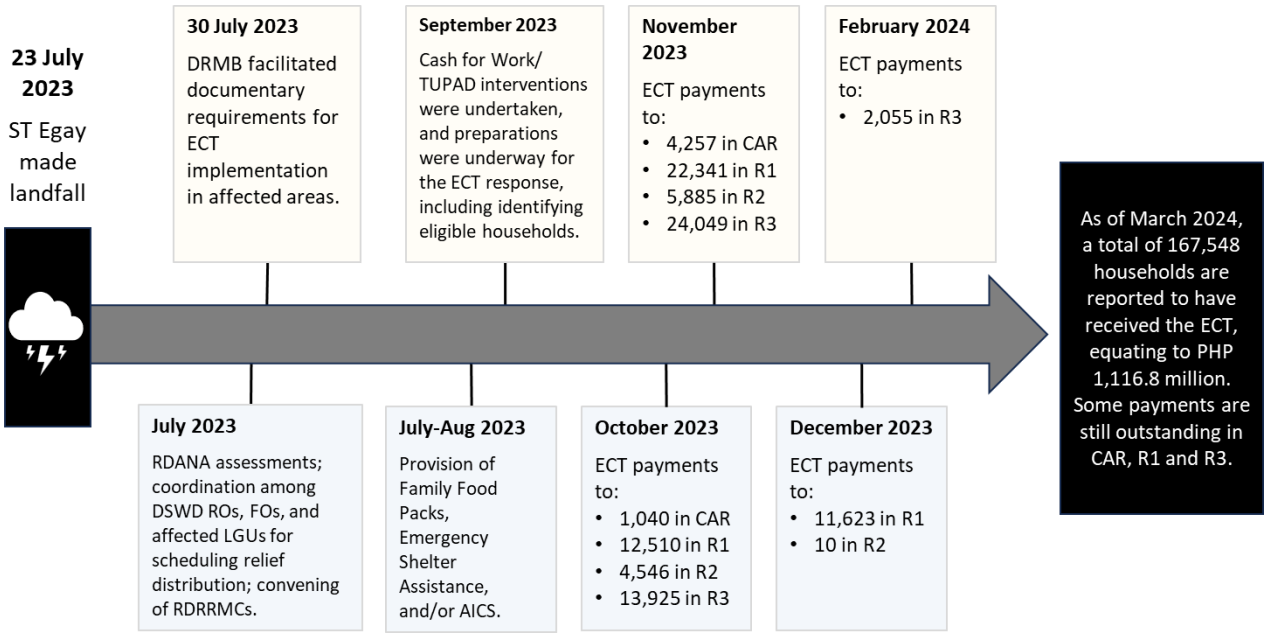
**In 2021, DSWD and the PSA signed a memorandum of agreement on DSWD's adoption of the PhilSys for the identification and verification of social welfare programme beneficiaries as well as, ultimately, the payment of benefits.** This is inspired by India's Aadhaar initiative which links a national identification card to a bank account or digital payment method. For DSWD, the benefits of the initiative would include the digitalisation of DSWD's beneficiary registration, the establishment of a United Beneficiary Database, the identification and elimination of duplicate or ghost beneficiaries, the utilization of biometric verification, and the promotion of financial inclusion and digital payments. In June 2022, the DSWD began to explore digital payment options with an Indian technology institute, and piloted the use of an open-source G2P service delivery platform (OpenG2P) into the AICS programme alongside the PhilSys Identification Card for 158 beneficiaries in July 2023.

# Part C. Super Typhoon Egay and the ECT response

## 9 How the response to Super Typhoon Egay unfolded

**In the days, weeks and months following Super Typhoon Egay on 25 July 2023, a series of social protection measures were delivered to provide material assistance to people affected by the disaster** (Figure 6). These comprised food, other in-kind support, cash and vouchers.

**Figure 6 Timeline of ECT implementation in response to ST Egay**




Source: Authors.

**Precise timings and processes vary by location, but the sequencing described by respondents for this study are illustrative of the overall approach:**

- As an immediate response, many affected people moved to evacuation centers where they received hot meals and were registered as being impacted by the typhoon
- Soon afterwards—still during July, and into August—many households received Family Food Packs (in-kind food packages), Emergency Shelter Assistance (vouchers to contribute towards repairing damaged homes) and/or AICS (emergency cash) from their LGU. Recipient households were those identified by the barangay chiefs as being in need: these automatically included those in the evacuation centers, plus others in the community. As the damage to houses caused by the typhoon continued to be assessed, households were continuing to be added to the list of those affected
- In August, DOLE Field Offices in several regions instigated the emergency employment programme, TUPAD, providing 10–30 days of employment to workers affected by Egay, to

help clear and sort debris, unclog canals, recover materials and plant trees. More than 40,000 beneficiaries were expected to participate (Austria, 2023; Patinio, 2023).

- In September, Cash for Work interventions were being undertaken, and preparations were underway for the ECT response, including identifying eligible households. The DSWD sent a request for NDRRM Fund Augmentation for various disaster response and early recovery programmes, projects, and activities in response to both Egay and Falcon—including the ECT—amounting to PHP 1.9 billion.
- ECT funds began to be distributed to households from October onwards, through to the end of the year and the start of 2024. As part of this process, the Office of the President approved the request for augmentation of funding in October, and the additional funds were issued to DSWD in November.

**Under the ECT programme, about 225,000 affected households have been identified as eligible to receive assistance across five regions:** Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR), Region I (Ilocos), Region II (Cagayan Valley), Region III (Central Luzon), and Region MIMAROPA (Southwestern Tagalog) (Table 5). We estimate that this means in the region of 1 million affected people were expected to be covered by the support[9].

## Table 5. ECT disbursements to Typhoon Egay by March 2024, by region

| Region | Households targeted for ECT | ECT recipients (2023) | ECT recipients (Q1 2024) | Disbursement rate (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| CAR | 6,150 | 5,297 | - | 86 |
| Region I | 112,711 | 66,925 | - | 59 |
| Region II | 10,489 | 10,489 | - | 100 |
| Region III | 86,883 | 40,029 | 35,837 | 87 |
| MIMAROPA | 8,971 | 8,971 | - | 100 |
| **Total** | **225,204** | **131,711** | **35,837** | **74** |

Source: ECT disbursement data from DSWD (Manila and field offices).

**By March 2024, over 167,000 households—some 74% of the original number targeted — had received a payment.** ECT releases were still outstanding in CAR, which had paid 86% of its target beneficiaries; Region III, which had paid 87%; and Region I, which had reached 59%.

**The ECT assistance after Super Typhoon Egay differed from the approach envisaged in the ECT Operational Manual in several ways:**

- First, the manual indicates that beneficiaries of the 4Ps programme are to be priority recipients, along with poor and near-poor households who are registered on the Listahanan

[9] Average household size in the Philippines is 4.1.

database but not enrolled in the 4Ps. However, this could not be done because the officials responsible for identifying people in need did not have access to a list of 4P recipients.

- Second, the transfer is expected to be issued within 2-3 weeks for 'priority' households and 5-6 weeks for those considered a secondary priority, with the option of a second tranche for early recovery and rehabilitation around three to four months after the disaster. In the case of the Egay response, households received a single payment around the timing expected for the second tranche (Table 6). Depending on the prevailing regional daily wage rate, the level of damage, and the financial resources available, the benefit amount varied from one affected locality to another.
- Third, the operational manual does not restrict the number of ECT transfers provided to a family within a financial year. In the 2023 disasters, funding constraints meant that programme implementers capped payouts at one per financial year, so households who were affected by both Egay and Falcon received one payment intended to cover both (perhaps especially as, in this instance, the two typhoons were only a few days apart and could be viewed as a single disaster event, and because affected families were also eligible for assistance from other programmes).

## Table 6. ECT benefit amount per household in response to ST Egay by March 2024, by region

| **Region** | | **No. of days of support** | | | **Therefore: Benefit value (PHP)** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 75% of daily wage rate (PHP) | *Totally damaged houses* | *Partially damaged houses* | *Other affected families* | *Totally damaged houses* | *Partially damaged houses* | *Other affected families* | Transfers (PHP million) |
| CAR | 300 | 45 | 22 | 0 | 13,500 | 6,600 | 0 | 48.7 |
| Region I | 300 | 45 | 22 | 15 | 13,500 | 6,600 | 4,500 | 506.1 |
| Region II | 315 | 45 | 22 | 0 | 14,175 | 6,930 | 0 | 95.4 |
| Region III | Not known | Not known | | | 5,175 (average) | | | 392.6 |
| MIMAROPA | Not known | Not known | | | 8,246 (average) | | | 74.0 |
| | | | | | | | **Total** | 1,116.8 |

Source: ECT disbursement data from DSWD. Note: Region III and Region MIMAROPA did not disaggregate their cost data by totally damaged houses, partially damaged houses or other affected families. The total amount was divided by the total affected beneficiaries to obtain the per beneficiary benefit value. This was assumed to be the same for all three categories of affected individuals.

The factors determining these design decisions are explored more in the next section.

# 10 The contribution of the social protection system in the response to Egay

**We now look at how investments and activities in the social protection system shaped the implementation of the ECT for relief assistance after Egay**. These are identified in line with the World Bank's social protection delivery chain as per Figure 2 above: we explore the processes for assessment, enrolment, delivery of benefits, and programme management[10].

## 10.1 Assessment: Identifying and informing the affected population

**The assessment as to who was affected by Super Typhoon Egay profiled two elements:** first, the geographical areas affected, and second, the households within the targeted areas, according to the level of damage to their property and their economic status.

### Activation of the ECT in affected areas

**The identification of locations affected by the typhoon was straightforward.** As the tropical depression approached, bulletins were being issued by the meteorological agency, PAGASA, while the DSWD-DRMB's operational monitoring and information centre, DROMIC, was closely monitoring the possible impacts and coordinating with the DSWD Field Offices.

**'Preparedness for response' procedures were activated, including daily situation reports starting two days before the typhoon made landfall.** This early cascading of information down to community level represents an improvement on previous years thanks to better satellite data and more infrastructure such as radar. The DSWD is a partner and user of this information, as many agencies across government are; it is not a funder. Modelling was used to generate maps and tables of 'Predictive Analytics for Humanitarian Response'; these included estimates of both the total number of households likely to be affected, and the number of poor households in the Listahanan database. An inventory was compiled of stockpiles of Family Food Packs, other food items and non-food items in every DSWD Field Office, plus the sum of standby funds in the QRFs. A 'Pre-Disaster Risk Assessment' meeting was convened. Quick response teams and volunteers were put on standby for deployment. By the morning of 23 July, forecasts of the intensity of the typhoon, in terms of areas and families affected, were increasingly severe.

**All of these preparations are well rehearsed and indicate the level of investment in integrating disaster preparedness and response with social protection.** They are part of the standard response to typhoons, and cannot be ascribed or apportioned either to Egay alone, nor to the ECT programme; many extend far beyond the DSWD. With each emergency, the investments made in these systems reap efficiencies; the workforce are familiar with procedures, coordination mechanisms are in place, and support can be delivered promptly.

[10] The ECT itself utilizes a similar delivery chain as the one in Figure 2, but with seven steps rather than nine: i) activation of ECT as a disaster response intervention, ii) identification and verification of beneficiaries, iii) notification and orientation of beneficiaries, iv) delivery of cash assistance to the beneficiaries, v) recovery and rehabilitation support, vi) reporting, monitoring and evaluation, and vii) risk and grievance management.

**Once a state of calamity was declared, DSWD staff gathered information on the level of need, to decide whether to activate the ECT and the amount of assistance required.** They participated in the Rapid Damage Assessment and Needs Analysis, a tool characterised as determining, 'What has happened' and, 'What should be done' (NDRRMC, 2015).

## Outreach, intake and the assessment of the affected population

**Awareness-raising about programmes in a disaster differs from outreach about regular social protection programmes as affected households typically know that authorities may provide support**. Assistance is visible: social workers, barangay chiefs, politicians and others are present and inform the population about support available; information can be shared, and affected households registered, at evacuation centres; and as other cash and in-kind transfers are distributed first, there are opportunities for DSWD staff also to provide information about the ECT.

**We have seen that two major social protection digital systems could have been used at the assessment stage but were not: the database of 4Ps beneficiaries, who should automatically be identified as in need of assistance, and more broadly the poor and near-poor households recorded in the Listahanan.** Barangay chiefs generate their own lists of affected households by hand and share them with the municipal DSWD office. This separate list, key informants noted, can be influenced by inter-personal and political factors, and there is no automatic way of making a link with the 4Ps database. Even if a printout were available, it would require barangays to manually cross-check the identified affected population with the names listed. Consequently, some of the most vulnerable individuals affected by the disaster may not receive the ECT; moreover, as a result, no record is present as to what share of ECT beneficiaries are 4Ps beneficiaries.

**Part of the constraint on using the systems was that at the time of Egay, the databases were in the midst of a long transition.** The Listahanan, originally intended to be updated every four years, was reported either not to have been updated for many years, or only partially; there were mixed perceptions as to whether it would be kept once the newer CBMS became functional, and DSWD staff were awaiting further instructions. For this reason, the fresh list of affected households may have been considered more reliable given the risk of high errors of inclusion or exclusion in the Listahanan, especially in a country where a multitude of natural hazards may constantly change people's vulnerability status. Enhancements that might improve its relevance in disasters, such as geotagging households, would need to wait until its continuation was certain.

**At the same time, the CBMS was not yet operational.** While it was embedded in national legislation and conceptually appreciated by stakeholders, it had not been simultaneously and comprehensively collected across the country, and the system was not standardized. As of May 2023, the CBMS had been conducted in 701 LGUs (about half of the total), many under a PSA-led rollout exercise; however, the data were still being processed (PSA, 2023d). Data collection activities across 1.2 million more households had been planned in 2023 but were yet to take place (PSA, 2023c). One contributing factor is that LGUs are liable for most of the expenses (e.g., training, labour and materials) to undertake these activities, with technical assistance and

supervision provided by the PSA. Given limited fiscal space it is natural that many sub-national offices continued to use the outdated Listahanan for targeting of programmes. Another factor cited by key informants was that the sheer length of the 18-section household profile questionnaire (CBMS Form 2) discouraged its use.

**Where the CBMS did exist, it was not apparent that it would address the limitations of the handwritten forms**. As an Excel-based system, it still relied on an initial manual data collection with subsequent transcription, lacking interoperability with other databases. Meanwhile, for some, the CBMS was instead considered a general planning tool rather than a source of household vulnerability data, since it contains other data and indicators besides household-level information, such as the barangay profile questionnaire.

**Efforts are now underway to complete the CBMS and integrate it with other information systems, via investments being made by the PSA.** In May 2024 it was determined that data collection for the 2024 population census and the CBMS would be combined, costing a total of PHP 5.7 billion and covering 27.4 million households (PSA, 2024b). The aim is to ensure the standardized implementation of the CBMS and to enable the PSA to establish a national CBMS databank, based on which poor individuals will be identified with the help of NEDA and DSWD. The PSA has also developed and piloted applications to gather household- and barangay-level data under the CBMS, which allow for online submission of data to the PSA. Lastly, in 2023, the PSA in collaboration with DSWD has also established a Technical Working Group aimed at strengthening the interoperability of the CBMS, the Listahanan and the PhilSys registry.

## 10.2 Enrolment: identification, verification and onboarding

**At the enrolment stage, authorities must be satisfied as to the identity of the person who will receive the ECT, while the recipient must be informed that they have been accepted onto the programme and how much they will receive.** For the Egay response the identity management process was done in part using the PhilSys system that was still being rolled out, while the confirmation of participation was done by means of the Disaster Assistance Family Access Card (DAFAC).

**A feature of the ECT is that it is a DSWD-funded programme that relies on LGUs to fulfil some key functions in the delivery chain.** It is primarily the role of the barangay chief or other LGU representative to assure themselves that the identity of the beneficiary is known and that, for instance, two members of the same family do not register separately to request assistance twice. Formal identity documents are required, but in a disaster such as a typhoon, some households in need of assistance may have lost their documents. Any individual that does not have a valid identification document can still receive the ECT if he/she possesses a barangay certificate signed by their LGU representative. However, this requires the LGU representative to know the person, else they may be hesitant to provide such certification. Meanwhile, the DSWD representatives only have the opportunity to verify identity documents on the day they distribute the cash (see subsection below). Given insufficient human resources, solely a fraction of the LGU-submitted beneficiaries were verified by the DSWD Regional Offices: one region estimated that only about 3-5% of the total beneficiaries submitted could be verified.

**There is a firm expectation that national investments in the PhilSys will ease many of the difficulties around verification of identity.** Key informants envisage that it can help resolve challenges ranging from a lack of identification to the misspelling of names, duplication of names and households, and the presence of ghost beneficiaries, ultimately improving the efficiency and effectiveness of programmes such as the ECT.

**Meanwhile the DAFAC system enabled households to demonstrate their acceptance onto the ECT.** The DAFAC is a physical card distributed to enrolled households, with a unique serial number to track how many have been given out. On one side it lists the personal details of the household; on the other, the social worker records the dates and amounts of assistance provided. Being written by hand, it is difficult to integrate the information it contains with other systems for monitoring and reporting. The government has since developed an updated tool, the Family Assistance Card in Emergencies and Disasters (FACED), to become an assessment tool for emergencies and disasters in DSWD Field Offices and LGUs[11]. In principle, 4Ps beneficiaries should not need the separate card if their assistance were topped up through the regular 4Ps channels; but as they could not be identified, a single process covered all recipients.

## 10.3 Provision: the distribution of the ECT benefit

### Costs and opportunity costs of the ECT payment process

**ECT payments for Super Typhoon Egay were distributed manually**. LGUs would organise the paypoints in their local area and convene recipients on the agreed day. DSWD Field Office staff designated as Special Disbursing Officers (SDOs), and supervising teams of payout officers, would go from one municipality to the next to deliver cash in hand to recipients. Given that 4Ps beneficiaries were not able to be distinguished among the total affected population, the manual disbursement applied to these households as well: they did not receive top-ups via their regular payment channel of the authorized banks, as envisaged in the operational guidelines.

**This disbursement method incurred large costs of many types, which are expected to reduce considerably in future once payments switch to a more digital system:**

- Share of salaries of many DSWD employees spending weeks travelling to disburse the cash
- Material costs of transport, accommodation and meals during the disbursement period
- Opportunity cost of employees having reduced time to carry out their regular functions

**Limited human and financial resources are requiring DSWD DRMB to spark innovations by pooling resources at sub-national level so as to manually deliver the ECT payments on time.** According to legislation, SDOs must be sourced from the roster of permanent employees: a small pool, given that officials can only be given a permanent contract if the programme they are implementing is embedded into national law (e.g., the 4Ps programme). Only 10% of DSWD staff nationwide had permanent positions in 2023 (Ramos, 2023); (Senate of the Philippines, 2023). Consequently, since 2020, the Commission on Audit has allowed for selected contractual

[11] Guidelines on the Institutionalization of the FACED are in Memorandum Circular no. 12, 2024. (DSWD, 2024)

workers to be deployed as SDOs. Yet, given the increase in the magnitude and severity of disasters, too few SDOs are present to efficiently distribute the ECT, according to key informants – even when these are pooled from other regional DSWD divisions or field offices, such as through a Special Order on Deployed Manpower.

**In every emergency, the national government and LGUs have to find a balance, operating within the dual constraints of the workforce and their funding**: allocating more employees to the disbursement process may speed up the distribution of transfers but reduces the number of people available for other essential tasks, including to support ongoing social protection programmes. Payout during disasters is listed as a support function and not an actual output in the workplan, so staff are still required to complete their regular functions. As a result, during disaster response activities, SDOs and payout officers tend to be overworked.

**Regions I and III, for example, reported having 10 and three SDOs respectively as of March 2024.** This includes those drawn from divisions other than the Disaster Response Management Division, such as 4Ps and Listahanan staff. It was established that one SDO can usually supervise between three and five payout officers. For Super Typhoon Egay, Region I estimated that disbursement of the bulk of transfers took ten weeks; Region III estimated around seven weeks.

**Among the greatest strains of the manual payment system is the personal financial risk absorbed by SDOs.** SDOs receive cash advances for the ECT, with the amount depending on contract type and salary (ranging from a maximum of PHP 75 million per advance for a DSWD Division Chief, to PHP 1-5 million for a service worker). They are personally responsible and accountable for distribution and reconciliation: they must safely transport the cash to the payout location, supervise payout officers, liquidate the funds within a specified period of time, and monitor compliance of the liquidation of cash advances in accordance with Commission of Audit (COA) rules. If any money is unaccounted for or rules are misapplied—even if the error arose from an action by a different worker, such as those validating identification documents—SDOs are exposed to the risk of being personally prosecuted, paying the cost of the missing funds and/or losing their jobs. Staff assigned to the role of SDO do not have a choice as to whether to take on this personal risk, which has been described as a 'nightmare'[12].

## Efficiency savings envisaged under current reform proposals

**The digitalisation of payment systems is expected to provide great benefits to DSWD and its workers**. It is considered as a priority of the DSWD to improve the implementation of the ECT. Previously, DSWD sub-national offices could not spend their administrative budget on transaction fees or other service charges to a financial service provider. With the enactment of the Presidential Executive Order No. 170 in 2022, such expenses can now legally be charged to the agency's regular budget. This paves the way for digitally paying the beneficiaries of various social protection programmes in contexts where the relevant infrastructure is available and accessible. Key informants estimate this service charge to amount to around PHP 50 per cash transfer payment—roughly the same as is incurred through SDOs handing out cash manually.

[12] Some DSWD Regional Offices have developed their own procedures for sharing some of this risk more widely within the office, allowing accountability to be held by the group rather than the individual.

So, for about the same quantitative cost as the current method, the digital process will transfer the risk and accountability of handling large amounts of cash to the chosen financial service provider,[13] while additionally saving hundreds of person-days of time of the DSWD's workforce. The actual advancement of digitalisation of the payment process envisaged is relatively small compared with the possible range of G2P solutions available worldwide: for now, recipients will still receive physical cash on a designated day, but delivered by a commercial bank from a mobile ATM. Subsequent evolutions of the G2P scheme may eventually lead to the option of beneficiaries receiving the money directly into a bank account or mobile money account from a provider of their choice[14].

## 10.4 'Management': feedback, assurance and monitoring

### Updating and grievances

**Beneficiaries and the general public may file complaints and grievances online or in person.** Online, the DRMB e.reklamo system allows one to make a complaint, provide feedback, or ask for general enquiries on many DSWD programmes, including those implemented during an emergency such as the ECT. Alternatively, a submission can be made by walking into a DSWD or LGU office and filing an ECT Grievance Form.

**In the case of Super Typhoon Egay, the research team identified neither strong concerns nor strong praise for the current system: in fact, it was rarely discussed.** The system could merit analysis in future—if not already done for other emergencies—to explore further the reasons for the low profile, which could range from high satisfaction with the programme and/or the general level of government assistance, to limited awareness of programme entitlements (which vary according to the emergency) or of how to make a complaint.

### Exit decisions, notifications and case outcomes

**As the ECT is an emergency programme, it does not have exit decisions as other social protection programmes do.** Beneficiaries receive the allotted transfer value and there is no expectation of ongoing assistance.

**Routine data collection at all levels allows for the reporting and monitoring of the progress of ECT implementation.** Reports are submitted by the LGUs and DSWD field offices to the regional DSWD office, who in turn submit them to the central DSWD office and the NDRRM Council.

[13] It is envisioned that the Land Bank of the Philippines will hold the service provider contract with DSWD. As such, they are authorized to undertake the onward procurement of other financial service providers accredited to the Central Bank of the Philippines. Consequently, if would ensure that beneficiary households can eventually choose the bank through which they want to receive their cash transfers through. Here it must be noted that the commission charged by the various financial service providers will be the regular commercial rate. No negotiated rate will exist for the ECT.

[14] Lindert et al. (2020) rank G2P payment modalities for social protection on a scale of 1 to 4, where 1 is a single provider (not necessarily a commercial bank or mobile network operator) issuing physical cash to beneficiaries in person, and 4 is the virtual provision of money, deposited into an account by a financial service provider of choice. The modality proposed in the Philippines (distribution of physical cash by a commercial provider from a mobile ATM) rates at 1.5.

# 11 Drivers of costs and results

**Administrative costs of social protection and emergency response programmes necessarily exhibit significant variations, not only across programmes and countries, but also when observing a programme at different points in time.** This variation is closely tied, of course, to the scale and severity of the hazard or vulnerability to which it is responding, but also to the programme development process and its progression toward maturity as, over time, the relative importance of cost components may shift—for instance, set-up costs may gradually be replaced by roll-out costs; the latter of which also tend to decrease as the programme reaches its mature stage.

**We know that, when it comes to assessing value for money or return on investment in a system or programme, cheaper is not necessarily better.** For example, a programme that increases its spending on monitoring and assurance—such as to eliminate duplicate or ghost beneficiaries, or to monitor compliance with any conditions—may be able to make savings that more than offset the additional cost, and that may improve results. In the case of Egay, the cost of ECT implementation was reduced by adapting some of the procedures set out in the ECT Operational Manual, with the government citing budget constraints. The disbursement of only one tranche of support per household (the option of a second tranche not being triggered), and with a further cap of assistance for one disaster per year, are examples of these adaptations. At the same time, the historic underutilization of DRRM funds at both national and sub-national levels suggests that, where cuts are made, a shortage of funds may not be the whole picture: other issues relating to forecasting and budget execution may also apply.

**With respect to the ECT response to Super Typhoon Egay, we find some features that are likely to have improved the value of the response compared with alternatives, or compared with previous emergencies when systems may have been less developed.** These include the use of systems and processes available to the whole of government, especially the early warning systems and the disaster response process led by the NDRRMC.

**Meanwhile, a likely constraint on the cost-efficiency of the response is that every step of the intervention relied on manual processes.** They range from the handwritten submission of names of households affected by the typhoon from the barangay to the municipal office, to handwritten records for households enrolled to receive emergency assistance, to the manual distribution of physical cash. This not only placed a strain on the workforce, who were diverted from other tasks, but also limited the ability of implementers to undertake widespread assurance activities, as handwritten data could not easily be cross-checked nor linked to existing digital records such as Listahanan.

# Part D. Conclusions

**Reflecting on the social protection response to Super Typhoon Egay in 2023, a picture emerges of a set of interventions that drew on multiple layers of investment in national systems, made over many years at different scales.** Each layer contributes inputs (workforce and funding arrangements), processes and delivery systems. Moving from the systems with the broadest applicability to the narrowest, we find at least three layers in play:

- **Government-wide investments.** These serve multiple sectors and agencies across national and/or local government, of which DSWD and the social protection sector is just one. Of note here are the early warning system, the NDRRMC coordination mechanism, and the RDANA needs assessments. The workforce involved in this layer ranged from meteorological experts at PAGASA and statisticians at the PSA, to staff in many ministries such as the Office for Civil Defense, to LGU representatives and barangay chiefs.
- **Sector-wide investments**. These serve the social protection sector as a whole, supporting multiple programmes. In the response to Egay, the main investments here were the DSWD workforce, and the CBMS for registering households, the latter still being 'work in progress' at the time of the typhoon. The *e-reklamo* feedback mechanism also fits, though it is not clear how much it was used.
- **Programme-specific investments**. These serve the specific intervention under review—in this case, systems for emergency response through social protection, or even for the ECT exclusively. Here we can cite the workforce for DRMB within DSWD, and the DAFAC card and process for enrolling households to receive emergency assistance.

**Recognising this range of investments that contributed to the response, and drawing on the findings from the key sub-questions, we can return to the overall research question:**

> What are the implications (both positive and negative) of using government social protection systems and programmes, especially the ECT Programme, as a vehicle for responding to Super Typhoon Egay in the Philippines, in terms of contributing to a cost-efficient, high-quality response?

This research has found the following:

1. **The normative context in the Philippines has been quite favourable, building on both global trends and the positive experience of using social protection in disaster-response after Typhoon Haiyan in 2013.** The policy environment rightly emphasizes the importance of an integrated social protection system, for structural as well as shock-related vulnerabilities. Social protection legislation is long established and comprehensive, with linkages to DRRM recently added. DRRM legislation and policies such as the Philippine DRRM Act advocate an all-hazards, multi-sectoral approach, recognizing the value of social protection, and in particular emergency cash transfers, in supporting disaster response and early recovery. The NDRRM Fund recognises the value of the DSWD's activities through its

automatic annual allocation of QRF funds. The context is favourable towards system improvements, as indicated by the forthcoming Adaptive Shock Responsive Roadmap.

2. **Super Typhoon Egay affected some 3.6 million people, of whom we estimate that close to 1 million live in the approximately 225,000 households identified as eligible for ECT support.** The ECT was successfully activated. More than 131,000 households (58% of the target) had received cash assistance by December 2023, and a further 36,000 (16%) by March 2024, with the remainder yet to be paid at that time. The transfer complemented the programmes providing the initial emergency response, notably the Family Food Packs, Emergency Shelter Assistance and AICS. However, disbursements took place much later than intended by the ECT's policies, with one tranche instead of two, and without prioritising 4Ps beneficiaries.

3. **In practice, the results were achieved thanks to a huge and labour-intensive effort by the workforce of the DSWD and its Field Offices, the LGUs and other entities.** Naturally, when many entities are responsible for different elements of a single intervention, sound procedures for coordination and integration are vital. The governance structures for DRRM confirm the value of a coordinated approach: the NDRRM Council served as an effective coordination mechanism that facilitated planning and information exchange. However, there remain anomalies between responsibilities and accountabilities in the current structure, such as that DSWD is accountable for funds, but not responsible for all stages of the process that might expose the programme to fraud. Also, there is a mismatch between the fact that budget constraints are cited as a reason for the reduced transfer size, yet the contingency funds are not fully utilised: this suggests challenges in the timing and flow of funds, or in the uses to which they can be spent, not only in the size of the funding pot.

4. **A hallmark of the response, and driver of its cost and opportunity costs, was that many stages were undertaken manually.** They range from the handwritten lists of affected households in the barangays, and handwritten cards for households recording receipt of entitlements, to the distribution of physical cash to households. Some investments already in place, that might have been expected to improve efficiency, were not in fact used. Most notable here are the Listahanan registry and the payment mechanism for 4Ps beneficiaries, which are cited as a key element for a swift response in the ECT Operational Manual, but which were found to be incompatible with the overall manual process for the emergency response. There is a thirst among implementers to move towards more digital systems throughout the delivery chain as fast as possible.

5. **DSWD's ability to draw on all three layers of investment, as outlined above, is likely to have generated economies of scale and in some cases improved outcomes for both programme implementers and affected households.** Attesting to this is the evidence that improvements to early warning systems, thanks to better satellite data and good coordination of emergency response, are resulting in proportionally fewer fatalities during typhoons. By nature, the ECT is intended to be a coping mechanism in the event of a disaster, so investments in all aspects of DRRM, especially in disaster prevention, should help reduce the overall need for assistance and make it easier for the ECT to reach all those

affected. The relative novelty of the shock-responsive social protection approach also implies there are still options for improving the cost-efficiency and quality of responses.

6. **Integration and harmonisation among the multitude of programmes is a complex task.** Potential efficiency gains in the use of human and financial resources may be realised as the DSWD and other entities continue to develop more comprehensive policy guidelines with respect to integrating disaster response protocols into existing social protection programmes, clarifying whether and how other social protection programmes besides the ECT are to be adjusted in times of disasters, and how they are to be aligned with each other. In the meantime, additional human resources for DRRM activities at sub-national levels could ease the strain on the current workforce.

7. **Implementing these provisions in a context of rapid change and of resource constraints is even more challenging.** Systems are developed at different rates and in different ways, requiring constant recalibration of the way the separate parts are interlinked and coordinated. The fact that the Listahanan was not used in the context for which it was meant to be relied upon is a cautionary tale that, for example, if some parts of the emergency response process are manual, implementers may not be able to make full use of related components that have been digitalised; equally, digital systems must be reliable and up to date, with sufficiently frequent and high quality data collection, accessible to those who need to use the information. Many systems and processes are in flux. As devolution progresses, linkages and connections will need to be readjusted, as accountability for different systems in the delivery chain—and even, potentially, for the ECT itself—may shift between the DSWD and LGUs.

8. **The latest reforms regarding digitalisation and personal identification may support improved cost-efficiency and quality of both disaster response and social protection programmes in the future.** They include, in the government-wide layer, the PhilSys, the census (for expedited rollout of the CBMS), the use of satellite data to generate triggers for anticipatory action, and the further promotion of digital financial inclusion through the expansion of telecommunication and banking infrastructure and increasing financial literacy among the general population; in the sector-wide layer, the set-up of digital platforms for the distribution of social assistance, including contracts between DSWD and financial service providers, as well as interoperable programme MISs for improved data handling, targeting, programme management, monitoring, evaluation and reporting; and in the programme-specific layer, the introduction of FACED as an alternative to the DAFAC card. Combined, these systems have great potential to create more adaptive and efficient social protection delivery systems, including by simplifying identification and verification activities, improving targeting and payment delivery, and strengthening case management. In turn this should minimize the workload during disasters, lessen the burden and accountability of the SDOs, reduce security risks, and improve time efficiency. As further investments are made in processes and systems that support the social protection and DRM sectors, this will aid in guaranteeing that those most in need receive assistance.

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# Annex B List of interviewees

| Name | Position | Agency |
|---|---|---|
| Diana Rose S. Cajipe | Undersecretary, Disaster Response Management Group | DSWD |
| Rhodora G. Alday | Director, Policy Development and Planning Section | DSWD |
| Kristine Joy P Loneza | Policy Development and Planning Section | DSWD |
| Maria Arlyn A. Gerez | Project Development Officer, DRMB | DSWD |
| Kristel Anne G Panganiban | DRMB | DSWD |
| Vince Ray S Escarcha | DRMB | DSWD |
| Wayne Belizar | Director, Finance and Management Service | DSWD |
| Marife C. Leon | Division Chief, Sustainable Livelihood Program | DSWD |
| Joseph H. Lagman | Head of Compliance, Planning & Fund Management | DSWD |
| Maria Angela Gopalan | Regional Director | DSWD Field Office I |
| Delia B. Santiago | Head of Budget Section | DSWD Field Office I |
| Powel Batulan | Finance and Management Division, Accounting Section | DSWD Field Office I |
| Lorenzo Alphino | Finance and Management Division, Accounting Section | DSWD Field Office I |
| Kimberlyn L. Egalla-Madiam | Programme Operations Officer, DRM Department | DSWD Field Office I |
| Camille Jane O. Galanala | Social Welfare Officer, DRM Department | DSWD Field Office I |
| Kevin Arnold M. Castaneda | Case management, 4Ps | DSWD Field Office I |
| Ryan P. Arbollente | Statistician, Policy and Planning Division | DSWD Field Office I |
| Keisha Nguyen | Chief Administrative Officer and Division Chief | DSWD Field Office III |
| Zarbeth Baldonado | Social welfare officer, DRM Division | DSWD Field Office III |
| Dianne Joy Cayanan | Social welfare officer, DRM Division | DSWD Field Office III |
| Alvin F Santiago | Project Development Officer, 4Ps | DSWD Field Office III |
| Kristine Joyce Polintan | Project Development Officer, 4Ps | DSWD Field Office III |
| Juvie O Pangilinan | Regional Associate Statistician, Listahanan | DSWD Field Office III |
| Flor Agbon | Assistant Head | Calumpit MSWDO |
| Bernardo Rafaelito Alejandro IV | Assistant Secretary | Office of Civil Defense |
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