DISASTER PREPAREDNESS IN SCHOOL

by:
Lorie Acosta
Teacher III, Tipo Elementary School

Philippines is considered and identified to be one of the country’s most vulnerable to disasters. This is because Philippines is a tropical country that is prone to typhoons, tropical storms, landslides, volcanic eruptions, floods and other calamities. Typhoons top the list of natural disasters that most often visit the country. As a matter of fact, Typhoon Yolanda which hit Philippines few years ago was regarded as the world’s strongest and most detrimental typhoon ever recorded in global history. There are approximately 20 typhoons that visit the country each year. Out of this number, almost five to six are often considered as detrimental to lives and properties. Nowadays, when environmental destruction is too prevalent, the number and intensity of aggressive typhoons visiting the country is linked with the natural problems brought by climate change and most of all with the wanton destruction of the forests, mountains and other natural shields against natural calamities (Marshall, 2017).

The implementation of disaster preparedness and management program is a complex process. It involves and integrates different aspects and areas like risk assessment, contingency planning, communication system and capacity building. Each of these areas plays salient roles towards effective disaster management system of the school. Determining the types of risks, planning for future emergencies, conveying the disaster plans and measures to everyone and establishing collaborative disaster management endeavor make up a successful and effective disaster management system. Undoubtedly, disaster risk reduction is a fundamental component of social and economic development, especially in order to ensure sustainability of development in the future (Lopez, 2017).
Calamities and accidents may come naturally and unexpectedly. These may cause hazard and risk against students’ lives and the lives of other members of school community. Disasters may bring two forms of damages against the school community, damages against lives and damages against school properties. Natural calamities may also cause disruption in class sessions and educational operations and process in school. (Hustino, 2015). In the past years the world has witnessed a significant global increase in the intensity and frequency of extreme weather events such as floods, droughts, and tropical storms, which are expected to increase even further in a future warmer climate.

These are the reasons why every school is mandated to implement its disaster preparedness and management program. Part of this program is determining the type of disasters to which the school is vulnerable to. Identifying disaster vulnerability may serve as the accurate basis for the planning and organization of disaster management and preparedness action and initiative of the school. Disaster preparedness should also be the concern of every member of the school community, from the school head, down to the teachers, learners, parents and stakeholders.

References:

