

Closing Plenary Statement Delivered By Josephine Castillo

Community Practitioners Platform for Resilience

I am Josephine Castillo, a leader & community organizer of DAMPA from Philippines. We work in Metro Manila with urban poor communities. I am here representing the Community Practitioners Platform for Resilience. We are building this Platform as a space in which community leaders can come together to demonstrate and teach our practices as well as partner with governments, local authorities and donors.

We are very happy that Margareta Wahlstrom, head of UNISDR recognized that it is local, organized communities, people's organizations and grassroots women's organizations whose work is at the heart of local action for resilience. And therefore, communities need to be present in forums where the governments, local authorities and NGOs are talking about the challenges, achievements and the plans for the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action.

We want to congratulate and appreciate ISDR for a exciting and successful Global Platform in which we (communities) have had opportunities to bring our experience and knowledge to numerous events and meet with representatives of governments, local authorities and NGOs. The relationships we have built here will strengthen our ability to build partnerships at home.

Through our participation in the Global Platform we have been able to show the contributions grassroots women playing in building resilient communities. In the context of disaster recovery and reconstruction, we showed in our thematic session at the World Reconstruction Conference how the public roles that grassroots women undertake - by distributing aid, collecting and disseminating information, by monitoring construction - accelerate recovery and transform the long term development of communities. In the context of disaster risk reduction community leaders presented the many ways in which we are convincing local and national officials that it is in everyone's interest to work together.

But it is also clear to us that there are still many challenges that we have to address - problems we have to solve. Most resilience programs are top down and highly compartmentalized. They focus on one area - health, housing, food or infrastructure. For us resilience has to be seen in a holistic way and programs have to allow us - local communities - to decide what is most important for us to address.