

Recognizing Results on Disaster Risk Reduction

I. Rationale.

Governments, in partnership with key stakeholders (i.e., NGOs, communities, academe, media, etc), can promote the significance of implementing the HFA instrument by identifying good practices and establishing an award scheme that gives due recognition to individuals, institutions, and partner organizations which have successfully and innovatively translated the HFA mantra into tangible results. People and organizations are more inclined to embrace DRR as an integral part of their disaster management system and continue their DRR work if Governments show positive reception and approval.

An award scheme on disaster risk reduction can:

- Show empirical data that HFA and its priority actions are being and can be done;
- Provide good models for replication/customized adoption;
- Reinforce and help sustain the drive of the local government units and other stakeholders for more proactive and pioneering initiatives;
- Serve as a catalyst for policy reforms at the national and local levels;
- Provide inspiration to others
- Be a vehicle for greater public and private sector partnership and an incentive for positive behavioral change
- Be instrumental in creating stimulus in the socio-political environment to direct stakeholders' energies towards meaningful DRR work

As a country rich in experience, good case stories and practices in disaster risk reduction, it will be beneficial to document this awards scheme and present in the *Second Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction* not only to help us recognize innovative efforts in building resilient communities but more importantly, share with other nations, groups and organizations that indeed something can be done to increase people's capacities and reduce their risks.

II. Search for Excellence in Disaster Risk Management and Humanitarian Assistance: The Gawad KALASAG Award in the Philippines.

Kalasag is the Filipino term for “shield” used by early Filipinos as a means of protection from attacks of enemies or harmful animals. Relatedly, Gawad KALASAG was conceived to encourage participation of various stakeholders in designing and implementing Disaster Risk Management (DRM) programs aimed at protecting or shielding high risk communities against hazards. Culturally, institutions, organizations and individuals respond to recognition.



In 1998, the National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC) initiated the *Gawad KALASAG* as a recognition scheme in its search for excellence on DRM and humanitarian assistance. It provides the mechanism in obtaining sustained commitment and support from the highest level of government by recognizing the exceptional contributions of the various DRM practitioners and humanitarian workers in building the resilience of nations and communities to disaster. At the

same time, *Gawad KALASAG* continues to promote the spirit of volunteerism among agencies and individuals in providing the much needed help during the response phase of DRM. Practitioners of DRM include the Local Disaster Coordinating Councils (LDCCs) at the provincial, city, municipal and barangay/village levels. The LDCCs serve as the frontliners in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from any type of disaster or emergency. Moreover, non-government organizations (NGOs), private/volunteer organizations, and government emergency managers are the prime contributors and major stakeholders/partners in the implementation of DRM and humanitarian response programs. The *Gawad KALASAG* also aims to recognize individuals, groups or institutions that have shown extraordinary courage, heroism, self-sacrifice, and bravery against all odds in times of natural and human-induced emergencies and disasters.

After a decade of celebrating the good practices of stakeholders in DRM, *Gawad KALASAG* has just expanded its current recognition scheme and now includes award categories which promote awareness and practice of CBDRM program in the Philippines. In addition to the list of DRM practitioners already mentioned, initiatives of media, donor agencies, and the community themselves shall also be publicly acknowledged. Moreover, this year's *Gawad KALASAG* will also recognize schools and hospitals which have implemented significant DRM programs to include measures to ensure the structural safety of these critical infrastructures.

Gawad KALASAG is guided by a set of principles, to include among others: stakeholders' participation, transparency, innovativeness, partnership, self-reliance, and spirit of volunteerism. It encourages the active participation of key stakeholders throughout the conceptualization stage to the actual implementation of the program. To ensure the smooth conduct of the Search, Selection Committees are organized at all levels. Through the years, *Gawad KALASAG's* selection process is kept transparent and the evaluation result is consistently reliable.

The awarding ceremony of the *Gawad KALASAG* is the highlight of the annual observance of the National Disaster Consciousness Month (NDCM) being held every July. The President of the Philippines confers the plaques, citations, and cash awards to the winners of the *KALASAG*. To date, 49 LDCCs, 18 NGOs, 15 individuals, and 54 groups/institutions have received various recognitions from *Gawad KALASAG*. Out of these awardees, the following have been conferred with the Hall of Fame award, namely:

Local Disaster Coordinating Councils Category

1. Province of Negros Occidental (2006)
2. Municipality of Labo, Camarines Norte (2008)
3. Municipality of Dumangas, Province of Iloilo (2007)
4. Brgy Carmen, Cagayan de Oro City (2008)

Government Emergency Responders Category

5. Olongapo Kabalikat sa Ginawa (KHG) (2008)

Private/Volunteer Organization Category

6. Negros Rescue Federation (2006)

III. Marketplace.

The Second Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction is an opportunity for the Philippines to promote its long-standing practice of acknowledging individuals and organizations that have supported the government's continuing effort to build the resilience of communities. Through the marketplace, various media will be utilized to showcase how the Philippines established and institutionalized the Gawad KALASAG in the country.

A. The Concept – “Gawad KALASAG”

- Display of “Gawad KALASAG Brochure” which contains the award's guidelines and assessment forms/checklists
- Banner – display a collage of pictures on disasters in the Philippines, people preparing for and responding to these events
- Posters– advertisement on the Search

B. The Advocates and Practitioners – “Hall of Fame Corner”

- Launching of “Ten Years After” video documentary and catalog illustrating a collection of short case stories of *Gawad KALASAG* hall of fame awardees
- Plaques, citations, and IEC materials of hall of fame awardees

C. The Good Practices – “Partners in Action”. The Philippines' Progress Report on HFA Implementation (2007-2009) will be launched. A compilation of videos will be shown not only those that are related to the KALASAG awards but also existing documentaries of good practices featuring successful case stories on disaster risk reduction.

IV. Implementing Partners

- Office of Civil Defense (OCD)
- Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG)
- Oxfam
- Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC)
- United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR)