

Business continuity leaders champion service continuity in government



20 APRIL 2021, MANILA—The Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation (PDRF), in partnership with the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) and the support of USAID-Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) and New Zealand Aid, recently brought together public service continuity (PSCP) experts to provide technical consultation on the draft public service continuity plans of government organizations from the first batch of the PSCP Mentorship program.

The lecturers came from both the private sector and academe: Enrique Victor Pampolina (Deloitte), Cristian Caong (JG Summit), Nestor Dabi (BC Consultant), Miguel Angelo Guttierrez (PLDT), and Dr. Eula Bianca Villar (Asian Institute of Management). They gave lectures on business and public service continuity in the time of COVID-19 and the implementation of their continuity program.

In addition, they elaborated the next steps in launching and implementing PSC programs such as resource acquisition, training awareness, and exercise and testing. They also provided practical tips (such as shifting to online learning and the work-from-home setup) and real-life examples of the importance of proper planning and implementation of continuity plans during crises.

“This public service continuity planning is an integral part of building resilience around the metro and the country. We need to find out how we can better apply all these learnings from the pandemic to help government agencies withstand shocks,” said USAID Regional Advisor Joe Curry.

The trainers emphasized that the plan is a living document that should be regularly tested through simulation, tabletop exercises, drills, and assessments. Every crisis should be seen as a learning opportunity and all public servants should adopt a

nimble, action-oriented approach to resilience and a “readiness” mentality to help them face any disruption.

Over 100 participants from Makati City, Quezon City, Metropolitan Manila Development Authority, Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration, Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process, Philippine Children’s Medical Center, Department of Trade and Industry, and the Department of the Interior and Local Government Regions III and IV-B attended the event. It aimed to teach testing and maintenance as well as plan-to-program implementation to ensure continued performance of critical organizational functions that will lead to long-term viability. Representatives from each agency presented updates on their respective public service continuity plans and the activities they have conducted towards implementing these plans.

“We are grateful for the support of USAID, New Zealand Aid, and our partnership with the Office of Civil Defense in helping build a more resilient public service. The PSCP mentorship program will continue to help our partners in the government to complete and implement your PSC plans,” said PDRF Executive Director Veronica Gabaldon.

Last year, PDRF launched a PSCP mentorship program to help its government partners in the completion of its public service continuity plan and implementation of its public service continuity management system.

The first two phases of this program involved establishing the Continuity Core team, the completion of a self-paced course on PDRF’s iADAPT, the creation and submission of the public service continuity draft, and 3-session webinar writeshops. The first batch of PSCP trainees completed these phases in December 2020.

The next phase will last for six months and will include program implementation, documentation and recalibration, and the compilation of best practices into “Serving Up Resiliency: A Cookbook on Sustainable Public Service Systems” which will be released in 2022.

To learn more about the PSCP Mentorship Program, visit <https://iadapt.pdrf.org/k3-briefing/>