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Disasters through an Indigenous Lens in the Philippines

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Social Work,
The University of Auckland, 2019.

Abstract

The indigenous *Kankanaey* people in the Philippines, like other indigenous groups elsewhere, have always existed with natural hazards as part of their everyday lives. Indigenous perspectives in the Philippines often situate a community's co-existence with nature, one of harmony that includes major natural hazards such as typhoons and earthquakes. However, it has become difficult to situate this harmonious relationship due to the indigenous communities' increasing vulnerability to hazards. The historical and contemporary practices of Western development and modernisation have changed this human–nature relationship by framing natural phenomena within a technocratic realm that 'scientifically' translates these events as disasters.

This study presents the results of an insider critical ethnography with three indigenous *Kankanaey* villages in the Northern Philippines as to how they conceptualise and respond to disasters. The data were drawn from 10 months' intensive ethnographic fieldwork with 37 in-depth interviews, participant observation and three village and one municipal level consultations with approximately 1, 000 combined participants. In addition, I conducted four bonfire sessions that were focused on elders' chants and story-telling. Inherent in all these methods is building and fostering solidarity that facilitated further understanding of indigenous everyday lives in relation to disasters. These methods are consistent with the principles of critical ethnography and considered culturally meaningful and appropriate ways of engaging with the *Kankanaey* people.

The overall study findings highlight that the indigenous *Kankanaey* people have varied perspectives about disasters. The traditional indigenous *Kankanaey* perspectives see natural phenomena as processes necessary in maintaining the human–nature relationship. Indigenous knowledge and sustaining practices leverage this relationship as manifested in their experiences and capacity to withstand these natural hazards. Furthermore, these perspectives consider the hazards of everyday lives, such as the effects of development aggression focused on mining, as forms of disaster. The contemporary indigenous perspectives also recognise and respect the significance of the traditional perspectives to their everyday lives. However, these perspectives have been largely framed by external influences that associate natural hazards with disasters. These perspectives have resulted in a general preference for technocratic responses and approaches over their own indigenous knowledge. Finally, this study shows that institutional responses to disasters are based on top-down mandates and frameworks that promote the dominant (scientific) disaster perspectives.

Drawing on a social justice framework related to perspectives on disasters, this insider study deconstructs the often essentialised and reified binaries such as the Western/scientific and indigenous/traditional divide that make indigenous communities more vulnerable to natural hazards. This critical ethnography incorporates an awareness of colonial discourses, power and performativity that further informs social work and community development theory and practice among indigenous peoples in disaster contexts. The thesis concludes with approaches to engage beyond this binary approach to disasters to consider the implications of multiple perspectives and stakeholders related to disaster risk reduction (DRR) and its implications for socially just and empowering practices with indigenous communities.

Acknowledgements

It would have been impossible to write this thesis without the support and contribution of the many people who journeyed with me all throughout my PhD. I would like to thank my participants for entrusting their stories and embracing me to become a part of these narratives. To the indigenous *Kankanaey* elders, thank you for sharing and living your wisdom – *namwaw*! I would also want to thank the local government of Kibungan and the leaders of the three villages (Madaymen, Palina and Lubo) for the help extended in coordinating the different fieldwork activities.

I would also like to thank my supervisors for their support and mentoring. To my main supervisor, Associate Professor Jay Marlowe, thank you so much for the great supervision. I am forever grateful for you teaching me how to "write from the heart." In doing so, I discovered the unfolding of my new self – an indigenous social worker from the heart. You challenged me with tough questions with my reading, writing and analysis, and those allowed me to strive further to attain my PhD goals. Thank you for understanding my indigenous history and culture and supporting me in many different ways. I have always felt that I had an indigenous community while I was away from home with your tremendous support. Sometimes I felt that you were even more indigenous than me. You are truly an embodiment of a great and compassionate mentor. To my co-supervisor, Associate Professor J. C. Gaillard, *agyaman unay*! It would have been impossible to do a PhD without your support and mentoring. For the guidance beyond supervision hours and the fieldwork mentoring, thank you so much. Thank you also for challenging me with that vast literature and encouraging me all the time to come out from

myself and discover things that I could do better. One thing you mentioned, and which I will never forget, was that I needed to "master the literature, build networks, and make good with presentations" if I wanted to be an academic. These three things were what I feared most in doing the PhD. Yet, your mentoring allowed me to overcome those fears. I take that challenge beyond my PhD as I continue to challenge what the dominant history has imposed on me as an indigenous person and I take inspiration in doing my work with your encouraging words – *sugod*!

To the people of New Zealand and their government who supported my PhD through the New Zealand ASEAN Scholarship, I am forever grateful. It was such a privilege to be chosen as an NZaid scholar and I will make sure to use this great opportunity in advancing the cause of social justice.

To my family – to mama and daddy, I thank you both for your love and support. Mama, thank you for those long-distance conversations to make sure I was alright. And to daddy, thank you so much for holding on for me until I had finished writing my full thesis. As you always did, you were thinking of me until your last breath. That remains as my pain but, at the same time, it is also a gift that I will continue to treasure to further inspire me in my work for social justice. To my brothers and sisters, thank you for your support. One of the reasons allowing me to survive this PhD in New Zealand is that my foster families "adopted" and considered me as their own. My gratitude goes to Mike and Joan Pan-oy, manong Esteban and manang Myriam, David and Young Han, and the Oh family. I also thank my PhD colleagues for the solidarity and the friendship. Special thanks to Laura and Khanh for all the help with my submission. To my copy-editors for helping with the final copy of this thesis, thank you. Ralph, thank you also for the layout.

Finally, *salamat* to my friends in the Philippines and all those whom I might have failed to mention here for supporting me in many different ways in my PhD, especially during my fieldwork. This thesis was indeed built from solidarity, friendship and love for humanity.

To Dad,

You were the light that

illuminated my path

through the PhD.

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List of Acronyms

ADSDPP	Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development Plan
BDRRMP	Barangay Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan
CADT	Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title
CAR	Cordillera Administrative Region
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DILG	Department of the Interior and Local Government
DOH	Department of Health
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
DSWD	Department of Social Welfare and Development
EO	Executive Order
FPIC	Free Prior and Informed Consent
ICCs	Indigenous Cultural Communities
IKSP	Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IPO/s	Indigenous Peoples' Organisation/s
IPRA	Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act
IPs	Indigenous Peoples
LGU	Local Government Unit
NCIP	National Commission on Indigenous Peoples
NDRRMC	National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council
NGO/s	Nongovernment Organisation/s
OCD	Office of Civil Defence
PBSP	Philippine Business for Social Progress
RA	Republic Act
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries
UNISDR	United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WFP	World Food Programme

Glossary of *Kankanaey* Terms

At-ato	Bonfire
Awil	The practice of gifting someone with a pair of animals. In most cases, domestic fowls are used as gifts. One who visits a certain family or community, usually a child but not in all circumstances, is gifted with a pair of animals.
Bagan	Traditional indigenous *Kankanaey* conveyance for irrigation
Bain	Literally translated as shame
Du-o	The practice of providing basic needs such as food to members of the community who are not capable of sustaining their needs at a given time or circumstance
En ipo-ot	To seek interviews
Gubo	Traditional indigenous *Kankananey* basket for catching fish
Inatep	Traditional indigenous *Kankanaey* house
Inayan	Fear of a perceived someone
Kankanaey	A group of indigenous peoples in the Northern Philippines
Makidad-dad-at ya maki-ngal-ngalat	Engage in a continuing dialogue
Maki-es-esa sin panligatan di umili	To become one with someone's suffering; Solidarity
Makikumpas sin ipugaw	Build and nurture trust and relationships

Makitapi	Solidarity
Mankitin-nan-ay	Anyone who does not have the capacity to own or plant rice is invited to help someone, usually one who own several paddies of rice, during the planting season and is compensated with rice grains during harvest season. This makes it possible for everyone, including those who do not have rice fields, to have something to eat during the lean season
Nem-a	A *Kankanaey* traditional form of communal agriculture
Pabanes	This is a practice of wealthy members of the community to provide a pair of animals, pigs in most cases to families who are in need. The families take care of these pigs until they bear piglets. Once the piglets are ready to be separated from the mother pig, the original pair is passed on to another family in need. One of the piglets will go back to the original owner of the pair of pigs and the rest remain with the family. These will help them start a source of livelihood.
Pan-aaspuan di umili	Community gathering; Community consultations
Paniyew	An indigenous *Kankanaey* ethics that guides one's thoughts and actions from desecrating anything sacred such as a pact, place, or relationships
Pastol	This practice follows the concept of *pabanes*, except that cows and carabaos are the animals involved
Sida	This practice highlights the highest form or ritual among the *Kankanaey* people. Families who are economically capable to sponsor this ritual offer sacrificial animals to feed the entire community for a number of days (depending on the level of the ritual). This is their way of sharing their wealth such that economic disparities within the community is balanced
Taan	To care for someone especially for those who are vulnerable to exploitation such as the sick and the children. It can also mean respect or reverence to someone especially to the elders. In a political sense, it can also mean intergenerational justice
Tukod	Pillar

Chapter 1

Rethinking the Social Construction of Meanings

1.1 Introduction

Wooooh woooh wooooooh
Ipigpigsam ay dagem ta enka itayaw nan adawag ya nenmenem . . .
Ipipigsam ay ginawang ta enka i-anod nan rikna . . .

The text above is an indigenous *Kankanaey* song that talks about a woman asking the wind to blow stronger so that it brings her thoughts and prayers to the Supreme. Then she turns to the river and asks the water flow to become stronger so that it washes away all her pains and sorrow.

I am an indigenous *Kankanaey*. As indigenous peoples, we have always lived in harmony with our natural environment. Natural hazards such as typhoons are interwoven with our everyday life. As such, we have developed knowledge systems that have allowed us to live with these natural processes. However, outside influences like those from multi-national corporations and their powerful agendas have affected our traditional ways of life. Our community has started to devalue indigenous knowledge, which creates vulnerabilities that did not exist in

the past. Development aggression, harsh natural phenomena and other forms of hazards are increasingly affecting our community. Our responses to these hazards are becoming dependent upon technocratic knowledge and approaches. With lack of indigenous access to these forms of responses and an increasing encroachment of development aggression in our lands, the indigenous *Kankanaey* peoples' survival is at risk.

There has been significant literatures written about disasters and indigenous peoples, such as those by Dekens (2007a); Hilhorst, Baart, van der Haar, and Leeftink (2015); Mercer, Kelman, Taranis, and Suchet-Pearson (2010); and Shaw, Sharma, and Takeuchi (2009) among many others. However, most of this has been written by outsiders. Quarantelli (2005) argues that disasters are a social construct. This research contributes to this ongoing social construction of disasters by bringing into the conversation indigenous peoples' perspectives through an insider's lens. I am an indigenous *Kankanaey* social worker and I did this PhD research amongst my own indigenous community in the Philippines. I will be locating briefly my personal motivations in the next section and discussing more in-depth the values of insider-led research in Chapter Three. However, these diverse perspectives about disasters are not those reflected in dominant disaster risk reduction (DRR) responses and approaches. This applies, particularly, to the often homogenised or "collective" constructs about indigenous peoples' perspectives on disasters. In reality, indigenous worldviews and perspectives about disasters are varied across space (see Hilhorst et al., 2015).

1.2   Silent voices in the social construction of disasters

In understanding indigenous peoples' perspectives, one must consider the multiplicity of voices that emanate from the different ways people experience and respond to disasters. Furthermore, it is essential to examine the power (and powerlessness) that influences how people can actually make their voices heard and their perspectives recognised in DRR policy and planning. Hewitt (2005) talks about excluded perspectives in the social construction of disasters. Here, he discusses the significance of the social foundations of disasters in understanding how certain structures of societies can silence peoples' voices and marginalise their presence. In this

context, traditional indigenous peoples' voices that present alternative constructions of disasters such as the everyday manifestations of oppression in relation to development aggressions have not been heard in DRR policy and programmes. Hartman and Boyce's (1983) A Quiet Violence illustrates that the exploitation and oppression that silences the voices of the poorest villagers can happen within their own communities. Their discussion of these inequalities takes further into analysis how powerful structures and institutions, as well as corporations, have supported and benefitted from the widening gap amongst people in the villages. DRR with indigenous peoples needs to be anchored upon these understandings as this can either perpetuate or transform this silencing of voice and the resulting inequalities and oppressions.

1.3 The naming of disasters, power of language and hegemony

Bankoff (2001, p. 19) argues that the increasing impacts of natural hazards [to indigenous communities] "have caught the attention of Western media," focussing on these as disasters to generate external responses such as international aid. But disasters are interpreted in several ways and Western attention may not necessarily result in relevant responses to what people in specific contexts perceive as such. In the case of indigenous peoples, disasters often do not translate exactly into their indigenous languages. Such is the case of the indigenous *Kankanaey* in the Philippines. This further highlights that discourses on disasters are indeed a social construct (Perry, 2007) and require analyses that highlight the inherent power that language holds to potentially be a colonising force (Fanon, 1967). The naming of disasters as such, their technocratic responses, and how this benefits certain hegemonic structures and institutions are examined through social work's anti-oppressive lens in this research.

There is a common statement amongst social work authors that the social justice underpinnings of the profession have not been adequately defined (see Irizarry, Marlowe, Hallahan & Bull, 2016; Morgaine, 2014). With this in mind, my project attempts to further understand how social justice can be applied in the context of DRR, particularly as it intersects with how indigenous peoples perceive and practise their relationship to their environment in

their everyday lives. As indigenous peoples experience the effects of development in their daily lives, the naming of natural phenomena such as typhoons and landslides and their harmful impacts on people as disasters is what Rodney (1975) refers to as an essential tool in perpetuating Western hegemonic thoughts and practice (amongst indigenous peoples) (Bodley, 2014).

Young (1995, pp. 2,4) argues that "development" is often equated to "modernisation" and "economic progress," which can be seen as a positive introduction to indigenous communities. However, she then adds that development can also result in "human and environmental detriment." The process of development usually displaces indigenous peoples not only physically (Broad & Cavanagh, 2009) but also from broader and more holistic understandings of knowing and practising everyday ways of life (Chatty & Colchester, 2002). Such is the case of development aggression projects that indigenous peoples like the *Kankanaey* come in conflict with. Nadeau (2005, p. 334) defines development aggression as "the process of displacing people from their land and homes to make way for development schemes that are being imposed from above without consent or public debate." These forms of displacement impact their capacity to sustain their survival as can be gleaned from what Mercer, Dominey-Howes, Kelman, and Lloyd (2007) note is increasing indigenous peoples' vulnerability to natural hazards. Additionally, Dekens (2007a) argues that indigenous peoples' resilience to disasters is based upon their collective relationships as a community. The narratives of indigenous *Kankanaey* elders in the subsequent chapters confirm that development issues have affected not only their physical environment, but more so, their relationships as a community. Mirza and Mustafa (2016) further articulate this by saying that development has replaced solidarity with individualistic practices and the reinforcement of class differentiations amongst indigenous communities, thus affecting their collective practices that ensure resilience from disasters.

Moreover, development and modernisation increases indigenous peoples' vulnerabilities to hazards (Holden & Jacobson, 2012). This is in relation to hazards emanating from development processes, as well as the increasing reliance and preference for technological responses and approaches to disasters over local knowledge and practices by indigenous peoples

themselves (see Bankoff & Hilhorst, 2009; Bankoff, Frerks, & Hilhorst, 2013; Mercer et al., 2007). This is in line with Hewitt (1995), who states that the belief that disasters are extreme forces of nature promotes the implementation of technocratic responses to disasters. As a result, these scientific approaches often disregard indigenous peoples' time-tested DRR knowledge and practices that are inherent to their everyday systems of resilience (Dekens, 2007a). In addition to this, scientific approaches are often inaccessible to indigenous communities with these being commercialised.

1.4 Amplifying silent voices, bridging gaps, sowing the seeds for a meaningful DRR

Given the aforementioned factors, integrating indigenous and scientific knowledge in DRR is essential to bridging the gap and ultimately envisioning more meaningful DRR (see: Gaillard, 2010; Mercer et al., 2007; Pottier, Sillitoe & Bicker, 2003; Shaw et al., 2009; Wisner, 1995; Wisner, O'Keefe & Westgate, 1977). Indeed, the integration of local knowledge to scientific processes provides relevant and contextual DRR responses. It also opens up the opportunity for indigenous peoples themselves to participate in a process that allows them to critically reflect and make decisions about knowledge and practices that benefit their own communities the most (Shaw et al., 2009). Another significant gain in the integration of indigenous and scientific knowledge in DRR is to make indigenous knowledge[1]a credible source of information (Gaillard & Mercer, 2013).

Indigenous communities worldwide have lost some of their ways of life and knowing in DRR because of this technological invasion and other colonising practices (Shaw et al., 2009). The integration of indigenous and scientific knowledge in DRR lends a space where dialogue is fostered, and indigenous peoples can meaningfully engage with scientific knowledge and approaches. As Smith (1999) asserts, "claiming" and "reframing" are amongst the ways indigenous peoples can challenge the colonising agenda of scientific research. The integration

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[1]It is not my intention to diminish indigenous knowledge or frame this as "anti-science" by using the terms scientific knowledge and indigenous knowledge. Rather, these are starting points to discuss the binaries in DRR that have impacted people in unhelpful ways.

of indigenous and scientific knowledge thus provides indigenous peoples the space to claim and reframe their indigenous knowledge and practices as tangible and credible sources of information in DRR. Also, this provides an opportunity for indigenous peoples to reframe their alleged vulnerabilities to natural hazards by highlighting their strengths and capacities in the integration process.

However, disaster scholars have also raised potential issues of power and power relations in the integration process (see Gaillard, 2010; Mercer et al., 2010). Social work can be helpful in examining these issues of power in DRR. Drawing on the profession's anti-oppressive theory and practice (for example, see Dominelli & Campling, 2002; Ferguson, Lavalette, and Whitmore, 2005; Morley & Ife, 2002), social work may be able to highlight what Heinonen and Drolet (2012) argue as social work's unique role in examining oppressive relationships and inequalities that promote "vulnerabilities and the marginalisation of specific groups in disasters" (p. 124). In addition, Bankoff et al. (2013) maintain that "disasters are unresolved development issues" (p. 198). As such, the mobilization of people and communities to participate in development processes is pivotal in the community development practice of social work (Pyles, 2009). Thus, social work offers the opportunity for indigenous peoples to actively participate and contribute in defining and driving DRR in a way that is more meaningful, relevant and empowering to them. However, it is essential to note that the current colonial and welfare-based framework of social work practice in the Philippines also has the potential to be used by government and other powerful institutions and corporations to advance certain agendas (amongst indigenous peoples) (Yu, 2006). The vision for a social justice informed DRR practice with indigenous peoples is not without challenges. Social justice may not be easily attained or addressed, but this is something that social work can strive to achieve in DRR.

1.5   The research site

This research was conducted amongst the indigenous *Kankanaey* of Kibungan in the northern Philippines. The *Kankanaey* are one of the major groups of indigenous peoples in the Philippines according to the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples. They are found

in two provinces in the Cordillera Region – the eastern part of Mountain Province and in the northern side of Benguet Province. This research was conducted, particularly amongst three *Kankanaey* villages of Kibungan, a municipality in the province of Benguet. Documents that have been written about the *Kankanaey* people were mostly by early Western missionaries and anthropologists who lived with the villagers for a considerable period of time (see Bello, 1965; Scott, 1979; Vanoverbergh, 1977). Most of these writings would refer to the Igorot, which is the collective term for indigenous peoples in the Cordillera region, including the *Kankanaey* people. Noting differences between the groups of indigenous peoples in the region such as their languages, beliefs and practices, the narratives about these indigenous peoples' history and culture are a reflection of their historical struggle in rejecting colonial rule in the Philippines. This struggle focused on oppressive state laws and development practices (Razon and Hensman, 1976) that continue to manifest up to the present.

Kibungan is one of the 13 municipalities of the Province of Benguet. According to the National Statistics Authority, it had a total population of 17,292 indigenous *Kankanaey* people at the time of its latest (2015) census. It is one of the indigenous communities in the Philippines that has been granted "ancestral domain" through the issuance of a Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title by the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples. This certificate recognises ownership of the indigenous *Kankanaey* of their land and all the resources within it, including their indigenous knowledge systems and practices (see the Philippine Indigenous peoples' Rights Act 1997).

Aside from the resources generated from its major agricultural industry, the town of Kibungan relies on government and other external sources of funding to deliver social and infrastructural services to the people (DILG, 2018). Access to this funding is supported by various government policies and the formulation of plans need to satisfy donor requirements, especially those from non-governmental and international organisations. These include, among other pronouncements, the formulation of the Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development Plan (ADSDPP) as a mandated development tool for indigenous peoples according to the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act of the Philippines. NGOs that are currently working in the municipality

admitted that the ADSPP has been a consideration in their support for the indigenous *Kankanaey* people.
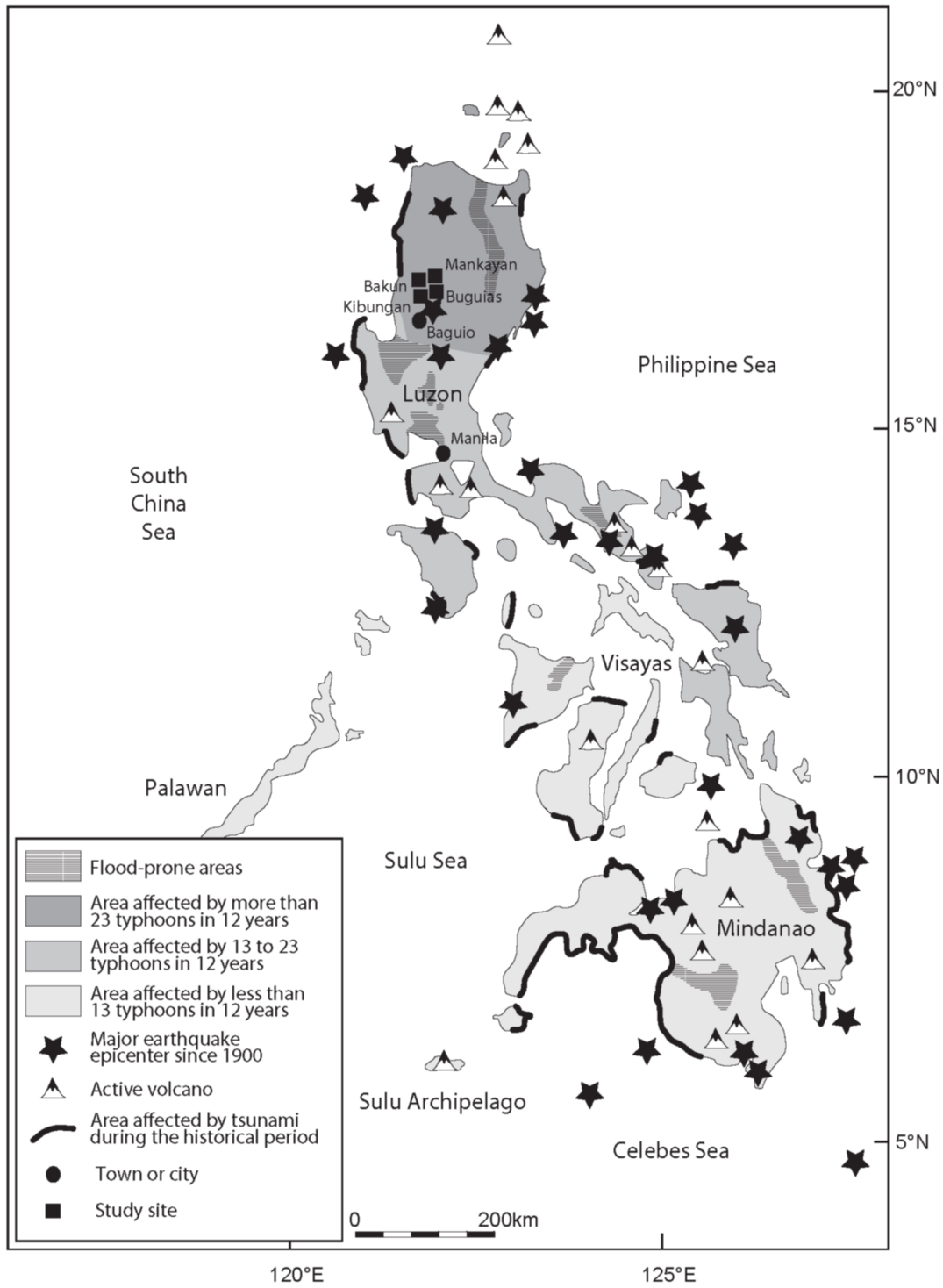
Figure 1.1: Location map (Gaillard, 2015).

Three villages were involved in this research: Lubo, Palina and Madaymen. The choice of these villages was based on their current struggles with development aggression projects. Lubo is the site of an abandoned open pit mine with current applications to reopen this alongside new mining tenements issued by the government (see MGB - CAR, 2018). In Palina, there have also been several mining explorations, with a recent one resulting in what human rights lawyers have called a "slap suit," which has become a source of great challenge to the villagers. The village of Madaymen, which is the centre of the municipality's agricultural production, also has several mining applications pending at present. Whilst all seven villages of the municipality have overlapping mining applications and can all be submerged once all these extractive companies start operating, the three villages mentioned in this research are those that already have direct experiences with the various stages of mining operation: application, exploration, operation and abandonment. A local coalition of NGOs has called these villages as "sites of struggle" in their anti-mining solidarity campaign. This is further discussed in Chapter Two to contextualise the study.

1.6 Locating myself in the research

My research experience is about a journey; a journey in a search for wisdom and knowledge from people in the villages and a journey towards my inner self to reflect on where I am in the current struggle for indigenous peoples' justice. As my friend and I drove back to the city after a community gathering (consultation), we passed by several villages and towns where I had worked earlier as a social worker. My thoughts were then filled with how I ended up with what I was doing at the moment – a critical ethnographic research on DRR. One of my undergraduate professors was instrumental in developing my interests in community development as a field of specialisation for social work practice in the Philippines. As an undergraduate social work student, I was already engaged in community work with people whom I had met through that professor. After my graduation, I worked with indigenous farmers under the Social Action Programme of the Vicariate of Montanosa. There, I was a community organiser and was tasked to assist indigenous farmers set up their community cooperatives, which aimed to strengthen their ability to increase household incomes. My assignment entailed

reaching the farthest villages of the province of Benguet. Most of the time, I would spend the whole day hiking from one village to another to meet with the farmers and facilitate organising activities.

Those challenging and endless walks literally became my journey into an awareness of the stark realities of the inequalities that permeate life as we know it. Along my way, I would meet village people who mirrored the different faces of everyday suffering. Whilst they also manifested strength and hope, these can be easily overlooked with the more obvious images of marginalisation and inequality. They would carry heavy loads of farm produce as they traversed risky trails to sell these to the nearest town, which is 8-10 hours away by foot from their village. In some instances, I would meet village men transporting a sick person to the clinic with the use of woven bamboos they could attach to their backs to make it easier and safer for them to navigate the mountainous trails. One time, I found a woman giving birth under a tree all by herself. She was on her way back to the village from the town to sell some root crops in the market when she suddenly felt contractions and gave birth in the middle of her journey. It was during these community organising days that I started to question why people had "chosen" to live in those mountains so far from everyone and everything. The only access they have to the outside world are narrow and steep trails that could be risky to anyone, especially during typhoon season. I realised that, although we share common issues and challenges as indigenous *Kankanaey*, some are still more privileged than the rest and that needs to be acknowledged and unsettled.

Indigenous peoples' struggles in the Cordillera region date back to the colonial period when they were dispossessed of their lands by oppressive land laws and government pronouncements (see Razon & Hensman, 1976). The Regalian Doctrine that was introduced during the Spanish occupation of the Philippines declared that all colonised territories belonged to the Crown of Spain. This was later reinforced by oppressive land laws, such as the Public Land Act of 1902 (by the Americans), that rendered almost all lands occupied by indigenous peoples alienable and disposable for exploration and operation by foreign extractive corporations (see Molintas, 2004). I deepened my understanding of these inequalities in

relation to the greater indigenous peoples' struggle when I joined a local NGO that worked with indigenous women's issues. By the time I started working with them, local NGOs in the Cordillera region were engaged in discussions and massive education and information campaigns for a proposed regional autonomy. This was supposedly a response to the indigenous peoples' clamour for self-governance and self-determination in the Philippines. With some unacceptable provisions of the proposed organic act, this was rejected twice in a referendum by the people of the Cordilleras. Then, there were all sorts of resistance and struggle for development aggression projects in the region; dams, mining, logging, conversion of watershed and forest lands to commercial centres such as malls and casinos, and many more. While activist colleagues and friends of mine marched on the streets to protest these, I was with the group that silently worked with people in the villages in response to these issues.

Figure 1.2: Part of the trail to a *Kankanaey* village in Kibungan – Photo by Charleston Pasigon, July 2016, (Photo used with permission).

In the midst of these struggles, the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (IPRA) was passed in October 1997. I got the opportunity to participate in round table discussions with people in the villages, NGOs and government officials to further understand this law and dialogue on how this could best benefit the indigenous peoples. However, there were differing perspectives amongst local NGOs and the indigenous peoples themselves on the passage of this law. Some were opposed to it whilst others were supportive. But what was interesting was how different indigenous groups and organisations came together in various venues to talk about their perspectives. It was the unfolding of a common pursuit; a united pursuit for peace, development and social justice. My participation in these dialogues helped me to become critical of the issues surrounding indigenous peoples and their communities. There was no collective stand amongst NGOs, nor the indigenous peoples themselves, about this law after the dialogues. Nevertheless, a consensus was reached and that was to continue upholding the rights of indigenous peoples and oppose the different forms of inequalities and injustices that are perpetuated against them. I was a part of this pact being one amongst those who sat at the dialogue table to talk about these issues. That emboldened my passion and commitment to peace and social justice amongst indigenous peoples.

As years passed in the NGO, I became particularly drawn to anti-mining advocacy. There, I was reconnected with the farmers I used to work with years ago in the far-flung villages of the province of Benguet. The injustices that I witnessed in my early organising work had become clearer to me by this time. The spirit of advocacy lasted beyond my NGO years, and embodied a commitment to social justice within myself that I brought along to different work contexts in government, international organisations, and later academia. As I worked with diverse settings, I started to broaden my understanding of the issues my own indigenous community were facing in relation to the struggles and experiences of other indigenous peoples elsewhere. This building of connection and dialogue with other indigenous peoples, alongside my continuing engagements as a social worker, led to my interest in learning more about disasters in relation to development aggressions.

I am *Kankanaey*. Mt parents are both *Kankanaey* from the Province of Benguet. I was born and raised in my indigenous community but there were circumstances that did not allow me to fully grasp my own indigenous culture. I had been a witness to many indigenous practices and dialogues whilst growing up in my village, but to me, these were simply ordinary practices and processes that encompassed everyday life in my community. It was through my work that I began to understand these processes and practices in relation to the challenges indigenous peoples experience in their everyday lives. It was through my work that I saw these rituals and processes as the foundation for a people's collective strength and resilience in their struggle to sustain their villages and thus their existence. It was through my work that I embraced and, indeed, began to celebrate being an indigenous person myself. I still get lost to the rhythm of the gongs whenever I dance the *Kankanaey* sadong and that to me is a metaphor of the many things that I still need to learn about being an indigenous *Kankanaey*, a social worker and now a disaster studies scholar amongst my own community. It is symbolic of my continuing process of becoming.

1.7 Rationale of the study

Building from the anti-oppressive and liberating foundations of social work (see Dominelli, 1998; Heinonen & Drolet, 2012; Ife, 2001), this research endeavours to analyse and understand the oppressions and inequalities that exist in a continuing colonial relationship and how these manifest in DRR amongst indigenous peoples. The varied indigenous *Kankanaey* peoples' perspectives and responses to disasters that evolved from the study are potential ways by which social work can continue to shape its theory and practice in opposing oppressive and unequal relationships. Dekens (2007a) maintains that the impact of disasters to community relationships and to their survival are a primary concern for indigenous peoples. Thus, the theory and practice of Westernised development to indigenous peoples, which have been regarded as one of the sources of many daily hazards, are relevant to the deconstruction of these discourses.

Research on disasters and indigenous peoples is not new. However, this research contributes something new to the field in so far as it provides a framework for the practice

Figure 1.3: Sunrise in Tacadang, Kibungan, Benguet – Photo by Charleston Pasigon, June 2016 (Photo used with permission).

of community development, not only for social workers, but for other professionals and organisations engaged in DRR with indigenous peoples. The framework brings community development work back to the basic question of "development by whom, for whom, and why?" It challenges the colonising agenda of Western development concepts and practice, as well as the issues of power and power relations that continue to drive this purpose. The stories of the *Kankanaey* people who were involved in this research raise an awareness as to the imposition of these Western development agendas amongst indigenous peoples. Their stories draw particular attention to the promotion of a dominant narrative about natural hazards as disasters and thereby the justification of institutional DRR responses and approaches that perpetuate these colonising agendas.

Specifically, this research reveals how certain institutions and corporations have benefited from Western development theories and practices that promote the naming of natural processes

as disasters. For instance, blaming nature for floods and landslides has become a comfortable way of diverting people's attention from seeing these as a consequence of development projects and other Western interventions for modernisation.

1.8 Statement of the problem

Development theories often emerge from Western contexts that have the means of theorising their experiences (Escobar, 2011). In another paper, Escobar (2004) maintains that colonial imperialism is carried out through coloniality and modernity, which perpetuates an inherently Western "being, knowledge and power" (p. 210). This has resulted in the marginalisation of knowledge from poorer nations. Ironically, these poor countries are often the hosts of Western development projects and activities, and their experiences have been the basis of many development theories (Rodney, 1975). These development projects are often located in indigenous peoples' territories, which have vast resources that are of primary interest to Western development corporations (Bodley, 2014). This implies that the practice of these forms of development by outsiders is often enforced upon indigenous peoples, resulting in their struggles facing development aggressions.

Indigenous peoples' resistance to imposed development also manifests in the area of DRR, where responses to natural hazards are based upon Western colonial approaches that disregard local knowledge and practices. However, the indigenous *Kankanaey* people mention in their stories that local knowledge and practices continue to work alongside external knowledge and approaches in their adaptation and resilience to disasters. Therefore, a community development process, including DRR, needs to start and build from Greene and Haines' (2015) concepts of mobilising the existing assets and capacities of people. This also resonates in DRR, where the integration of indigenous and scientific knowledge and approaches contribute to relevant and better disaster responses overall (see Gaillard & Mercer, 2013; Mercer et al., 2010).

1.9   The research questions

The following research questions have guided the overall process of the research. The main question was: How do indigenous perceptions of disasters advance theoretical understandings and practical applications of community development in social work? This focus was addressed through the following sub-questions:

1. How do indigenous peoples perceive and respond to disasters?

2. In what ways are the indigenous understandings of disasters relevant to community development?

3. How does the practice of community development integrate indigenous perspectives and capacities in DRR, response and recovery in policy formulation and program implementation?

Following an inductive method of inquiry, the main question investigated indigenous peoples' (*Kankanaey*) historical and contemporary lives to understand how their background and experiences continue to shape their perceptions of disasters. It explored how theories and the practice of community development can evolve from these indigenous perspectives and how these perspectives can contribute to advancing the agenda for a just and more meaningful DRR. The sub-questions explored perspectives amongst the indigenous *Kankanaey* on what constitutes a disaster for them. The second sub-question located where and how the indigenous perspectives on disasters are valuable in the theory and practice of community development. Finally, in keeping with the principle of inductive methodology whereby theories evolve from practice, a third and final sub-question explored the different ways by which the practice of community development integrates indigenous perspectives and capacities on DRR, response and recovery in the area of policy formulation and program implementation.

1.10   Importance of the research topic

The community development approach of social work provides a framework in engaging

indigenous peoples in disaster response and relief (Pyles, 2009). However, the application of community development as an approach in DRR requires some degree of astuteness. Mowbray (2011) acknowledges that community development has the potential to perpetuate the same inequalities it has sworn to address. Thus, Ife and Fiske (2006) propose that the principles of community development and human rights that emanate from the daily experiences of the marginalised and the oppressed have to go alongside each other in the theory and practice of community development. A number of the social problems with which social workers deal with emanate from systemic and structural issues of inequality (Briskman, 2014; Ife, 2001, 2012). Disasters constitute one of the issues of development and inequalities that often has an impact on indigenous peoples (Heinonen & Drolet, 2012). Understanding community development as an approach to issues of disasters challenges social work to critically examine how this is perceived in literature and promoted in practice. By doing this analysis, social work recognises its ideological foundations and performs its emancipatory tasks by decolonising its own theories and practice. A critical understanding of a community and its colonial roots is fundamental in the community development practice of social work (Gray, Coates, Yellow Bird & Hetherington, 2013; Yu, 2006). Recognising elements such as how a community is defined is of utmost importance. For example, in Matarrita-Cascante and Brennan (2012, p. 295), community is defined as:

> "*. . . a locality comprised by people residing in a geographical area; the resources such people require to subsist and progress; and the processes in which such individuals engage to distribute and exchange such resources to fulfil the needs and wants.*" (p. 295).

Critics of eurocentrism, however, strongly oppose the concept of a community that requires a "geographical area." In his "myth of emptiness," Blaut (1993, p. 25) provides a powerful critique on how the West saw "colonized territories [as] empty or occupied by nomads and therefore no claim to territory;" thus, open for conquest. In Matarrita-Cascante and Brennan (2012), a community includes a "geographical residence," structure and function that

are analogous to the Eurocentric requirements of a territory. Within this dialogue, a community is thus seen as a Western apparatus for advancing the agenda of expansionism.

Contrary to this colonial concept of a community, Anaya (2004) maintains that a community is an existence that connects the past, the present, and the future, to a collective principle that is neither defined by time nor demarcated by physical boundaries. This definition encapsulates indigenous people's concept of a community which is defined as a relationship within the principle of coexistence (Cajete, 2000). These opposing concepts of a community are mirrored in the contemporary practice of community development. Gow (2008) argues that colonisation has reinvented itself as the benevolent benefactor of aid to poorer nations and has since then taken the name of community development.

In the same vein, Said (1978) calls for the critical reading and understanding of literary portrayals in order to identify the hidden agenda and intention of the materials. This applies, too, in viewing how community development is packaged and presented. While community development lends a number of opportunities to engage in grassroots or people-led initiatives and activities (Green & Haines, 2015), it "can assist in the implementation of neoliberal agendas. . . " (Mowbray, 2011, p. 57) and can be used against its own ideal purpose of emancipation (Ife, 2013). Community development facilitates people's participation in defining their issues and responding to these according to their own terms (Calma & Priday, 2011). Therefore, people take an active role in confronting the inequalities that exist within the structures and relationships that operate around them. Translating this principle into the dialogue and practice of DRR goes back to the integration of local perspectives and capacities that are essential in the practice of community development (Shaw et al., 2009). It has to be taken into consideration, however, that local perspectives mean various people with varied views and experiences.

Encouraging indigenous people's participation in DRR as one of the focuses of community development starts from knowing the circumstances such as issues of marginalisation, power and power relations that drive or impede their aspirations (Mercer et al., 2010). One of the ways of looking at this can be through the person-in-environment social work

perspective (Greene, 2017). The "environment" in this sense refers to the physical, political, social, and cultural contexts of the person (Kondrat, 2002). Understanding the environment within which the person is situated (Green & McDermott, 2010) results in knowing and tapping into existing local capacities and potentiality in facilitating relevant responses to indigenous peoples' needs and issues in disasters (Mercer et al., 2010). Importantly, this perspective recognises that a person's thinking and behaviour is shaped by her/his environment (Kondrat, 2002; Roberts, 2009). This becomes especially interesting in navigating how oppressive and unequal relationships in DRR and disasters amongst indigenous peoples can, in fact, be shaped by one's environment.

Negotiating the complexity of understanding disasters from an indigenous perspective essentially dwells on the exploitative and oppressive relationships that community development can either break down or promote, depending on how it is perceived by the people and institutions facilitating the project (Briskman, 2014). Thus, the social work community development approach in relation to DRR must go beyond the usual norm of "empowering" people, which may be construed that someone lacks power and therefore has to be provided by another, to mobilising people to actively participate in challenging "policies" and practice that overlook "vulnerability" (Gaillard & Mercer, 2013, p. 108). Additionally, Alston (2013, p. 218) maintains that social work has to increase its presence "where environmental and disaster policy and practice are being determined." Social work thus has an important mandate to inform and influence community development by decolonising contemporary development practices in the area of DRR amongst indigenous peoples.

1.11   Chapter Summary

1.11.1   Chapter 1 - Rethinking the Social Construction of Meanings

This chapter provides a brief account of the social construction of disasters, which includes indigenous peoples' perspectives as viewed from an insider lens. It presents how some perspectives can be excluded in this social construction and how this form of exclusion benefits

structures and corporations to carry out their agenda amongst indigenous peoples and maintain oppressive and unequal relationships. Thus, the chapter talks about ways by which these issues of oppressions and inequalities can be further understood and dealt with, particularly in DRR, with the anti-oppressive lens of social work. The chapter also presents the personal motivation for doing this research as well as the purpose of the study, problem statement and significance of the study.

1.11.2   Chapter 2 – Weaving Threads of Meanings, Unfolding a Tapestry of Knowledge

This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part contextualises the study with a presentation of a literature review on the historical struggles of indigenous peoples globally and in the Philippines. These indigenous peoples' issues are discussed particularly in relation to disasters, which then brings the focus to the context of DRR in the Philippines. The second part of the chapter presents the theoretical foundations of the study. Focusing on the different constructs and paradigms about disasters, the theoretical framework builds from the binaries between Western/indigenous perspectives and how critical ethnography negotiates these. Additionally, the concepts of vulnerability, everyday life and everyday hazards are discussed and connected to the social work framework of anti-oppressive practice.

1.11.3   Chapter 3 – Between Two Worlds: Outsider/Insider Engagements and Critical Ethnography

Chapter Three presents the overall methodological framework of the research. It draws on the narratives of 37 participants (21 from the community and 16 from organisations) as well as insights derived from community gatherings and bonfire sessions. Alongside indigenous methodologies, the chapter discusses how critical ethnography, both as theory and method, has guided the overall research design, data collection and analysis. The chapter provides a discussion on how knowledge is constructed by the indigenous peoples: how one can participate and become a part of their ongoing story-telling about disasters, and how one can sustain this relationship within and beyond the research process. In relation to this, the chapter also

talks about how being a researcher has positioned me as an outsider in my own indigenous community.

1.11.4   Chapter 4 - Conceptualising Disasters: Traditional Indigenous Perspectives

This is the first of three findings chapters. Here, I present the theoretical discourses on disasters as social constructs by finding expressions in the narratives of the traditional *Kankanaey* elders and some of the community leaders. The chapter emphasises the everyday manifestations of oppressions, about which traditional elders and some community leaders are actually more concerned than the natural hazards. Part one of the chapter makes specific reference to understanding indigenous everyday life in relation to the everyday manifestations of oppressions. Particular attention is drawn on how the *Kankanaey* ethics, values and practices have sustained its people and communities to survive the daily challenges and hazards of life and the oppressions that manifest from these. Part two talks about development aggressions, particularly mining and logging, in relation to everyday hazards. It presents how the promotion of indigenous practices has been mobilised to respond to the challenges of development aggressions, albeit with the elders' acknowledgement that some of these hazards are beyond the indigenous peoples' capacity to respond to and may require some external support. This external support, however, needs to be anchored in indigenous peoples' visions for just and empowering DRR by ensuring that certain conditions are met and honoured.

1.11.5   Chapter 5 - Conceptualising Disasters: Contemporary Indigenous Perspectives

This chapter further challenges the homogeneity of indigenous peoples' perspective with a snapshot of contemporary indigenous peoples' views about disasters. The first part of the chapter presents that, although these perspectives (mostly from the younger generation of the indigenous *Kankanaey*) still recognise the traditional indigenous conceptualisations of disaster, these have been framed largely by external influences. As such, the second part of the chapter talks about how indigenous peoples try to negotiate these two forms of perspectives that are

sometimes in tension with one another, but can also be complementary.

1.11.6   Chapter 6 - Institutional Responses to Disasters

This chapter draws on the discourses about excluded perspectives in the social construction of disasters. It puts together the traditional and contemporary indigenous peoples' perspectives in the context of institutional responses to disasters. Part one presents how indigenous professionals can be so embedded in their culture that it becomes the underpinning principle of their DRR practice. However, as presented in part two of the chapter, the institutional mandates of DRR practice are based primarily on dominant perspectives, laws and frameworks, which reveal themselves as obstacles for indigenous professionals and organisations such as government agencies and various NGOs.

1.11.7   Chapter 7 - Development Injustices: Implications to DRR

Following on from the conversations of the diverse constructs of disasters in chapters four–six, this chapter outlines the implications of development as a DRR response. The discussion focuses on how development has created issues of injustice, specifically in the context of indigenous peoples' varying perspectives about disasters. Part one discusses how Western development has become a new form of conquest through the advancement of dominant and hegemonic perspectives and practices in DRR. These have transformed indigenous communities' solidarity and relationships into a class awareness. Besides affecting their sense of community relationships, which are the foundation for their collective resilience to disasters, development has also created environmental and disaster risks amongst indigenous peoples. Part two further analyses how certain institutions and corporations benefit from these development responses and are therefore promoted and sustained in the current DRR landscape. These DRR responses are largely framed by the dominant perspectives on disasters. The chapter concludes with an emphasis on the necessity to ground disaster responses in indigenous peoples' development framework and perspectives, which is explored further in Chapter Eight.

1.11.8   Chapter 8 – Deconstructing Binaries: The Just Practice Framework

This chapter presents a discussion on deconstructing the unnecessary binaries that impede the application of a just and more meaningful DRR amongst indigenous peoples. The first section discusses the Just Practice Framework in social work and how this can be engaged in deconstructing binaries in DRR within an indigenous peoples' context. The five themes of the framework are explained by using concrete examples from indigenous *Kankanaey* peoples' perspectives and experiences with disasters. Furthermore, the section provides an analysis of the opportunities and challenges in the application of the Just Practice Framework in DRR in indigenous settings. This is further explored in the second section of the chapter. Building from the ideological foundations of social work in the Philippines, the second section discusses how the five themes of the Just Practice Framework can translate into the indigenous *Kankanaey* ethics and values as well as the practices in social justice that were presented in Chapter Four. The chapter concludes with recommendations on how the "indigenised" version of the Just Practice Framework can be applied to disaster and indigenous peoples' contexts.

1.11.9   Chapter 9 - Conclusion

This chapter concludes the thesis by going back to some of the statements posed in the introduction and reflecting on these. It also incorporates a reflection on the recommendations made in Chapter Eight and how these can be engaged in terms of DRR policy formulation and contribution to the literature.

1.12   Conclusion

The series of natural hazards that were experienced by indigenous peoples of the Cordillera region, such as the Typhoon Pepeng in 2009, suddenly revealed the urgent need for institutional attention towards indigenous peoples and their communities and dragged me somewhat unprepared into this work. As a social worker, I found myself engaged in psychosocial debriefing sessions for indigenous families and communities affected by disasters.

There were "modules" to follow and these provided a framework to work through in a moment when everything was labelled "urgent." The affected indigenous peoples and their communities obliged with every process they were asked to follow, and the debriefing sessions required by the project were successfully "implemented." However, the reflection and post-implementation assessment sessions with colleagues articulated a reality that we have all witnessed but kept silent about during the process. Rather than psychosocial debriefing sessions, cleansing and healing processes that proved meaningful to the everyday lives of indigenous peoples affected by disasters needed to be explored. Whilst some NGOs started incorporating culturally appropriate approaches to this work, sensitivity to these processes when working in disaster contexts remains a gap in social work practice in the Philippines. This gap in social work practice on DRR with indigenous peoples, coupled with my short stint with the university as a social work educator, brought me to this PhD research.

Social workers in the Philippines have long been involved in disaster management work. However, this involvement in disaster work is largely associated with disaster relief and humanitarian work alone. This draws on the colonial foundations of social work in the country that promote the colonisers as benevolent masters in the midst of war, destitution and epidemics (Yu, 2006). I share the sentiments of social work students who go to the field and come back to the university frustrated with how people associate them with canned goods, noodles and oatmeal. There is definitely more to social work than distributing relief goods or facilitating feeding programmes. The following chapter presents how social work can move beyond this welfare-based image as it discusses the: 1) ideological foundations of social work and its critical roles in human liberation and in achieving social justice; 2) social work practice in DRR with indigenous peoples; and 3) the intersections between social justice in social work and indigenous peoples' conceptualisations and practices of social justice in DRR and disasters at large.

Chapter 2

Weaving Threads of Meanings, Unfolding a Tapestry of Knowledge

2.1 Introduction

Weaving threads of meanings, unfolding a tapestry of knowledge is a literature review that builds the theoretical framework of the study. The chapter is divided into two parts. The first part contextualises the study with a presentation of the historical struggles of indigenous peoples globally and in the Philippines. These indigenous peoples' issues are discussed particularly in relation to disasters, which then brings the focus to DRR in the Philippine context. The second section of the chapter presents the theoretical foundations of the study focusing on the different constructs and paradigms concerning disasters. In relation to this, the concepts of indigenous *vulnerabilities* that were discussed in the first section are connected to the social work framework for its anti-oppressive practice.

2.2 Contextualising the study: understanding indigenous peoples

In order to better understand disasters through the lens of indigenous peoples in the Philippines, an overview of who indigenous peoples are, their struggles and how these relate to DRR is hereby provided.

2.2.1   Defining indigenous peoples

Indigenous peoples are defined in many different ways by several institutions. The United Nations itself has several definitions of indigenous peoples. For instance, the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples defines indigenous peoples as:

> "*Indigenous peoples are inheritors and practitioners of unique cultures and ways of relating to people and the environment. They have retained social, cultural, economic and political characteristics that are distinct from those of the dominant societies in which they live. Despite their cultural differences, indigenous peoples from around the world share common problems related to the protection of their rights as distinct peoples.*" (UN, n.d)

The International Labour Organisation, through Convention 169 or the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples' Convention of 1989 defines indigenous peoples as:

> "*Indigenous communities, peoples and nations are those which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing on those territories, or parts of them. They form at present non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal system.* " (ILO,n.d.)

In the Philippines, indigenous peoples are defined through the Indigenous Peoples Rights' Act of 1997 which states that:

> "*Indigenous communities/indigenous peoples refer to a group of people or homogenous societies identified by self-ascription and ascription by others, who have continuously lived as organized community on communally bounded and defined territory, and who have, under claims of ownership since time immemorial, occupied, possessed and utilized such territories, sharing common bonds of language, customs, traditions and other distinctive cultural traits, or who have, through resistance to political, social and cultural inroads of colonization, non-indigenous religions and cultures, became historically differentiated from the*

majority of Filipinos. ICCs/IPs shall likewise include peoples who are regarded as indigenous on account of their descent from the populations which inhabited the country, at the time of conquest or colonization, or at the time of inroads of non-indigenous religions and cultures, or the establishment of present state boundaries, who retain some or all of their own social, economic, cultural and political institutions, but who may have been displaced from their traditional domains or who may have resettled outside their ancestral domains." (Rule 2, Section I)

A number of indigenous literature sources provide several other definitions of indigenous peoples that can also be contested (Kenrick & Lewis, 2004). For instance, Anaya (2004) states, "Indigenous peoples, nations, or communities are culturally distinctive groups that find themselves engulfed by settler societies born of the forces of empire and conquest" (p. 3). Here, he refers to indigenous peoples as those who have resisted colonisation but are now living amongst those who have colonised. Memmi (2013) affirms this and says that indigenous peoples are no longer living in the margins. Instead, they are living with the mainstream society who had come to invade their territories and that is why they are subordinated and why they are oppressed. Other indigenous studies Other indigenous studies such as Alfred and Corntassel (2005) and Smith (2000) have defined indigenous peoples according to their strengths and capacities. Briskman (2014) maintains that, from previously being portrayed as uncivilised peoples, current literature has since then changed such images by reframing indigenous peoples as having a capacity to resist subjugation and a determination to uphold their rights in the midst of the challenges that threaten their survival. The indigenous have begun taking steps to change their portrayal as "victims," devoid of strengths and knowledge, to where they can act on their own terms (p. 168). In relation to this reframing of indigenous peoples, Briskman further states that it is important to look into the historical oppression of indigenous peoples to be able to understand why there is a need to reframe them in the present.

2.2.1.1 The oppression of indigenous peoples

Social work discourses on the oppression of indigenous peoples trace this with the history of conquest and colonisation (Briskman, 2014; Gray et al., 2013; Mokuau & Mataira, 2013).

This reflects in the different UN definition on indigenous peoples, which associate them with their resistance to colonisation. Cajete (2000) highlights that indigenous peoples were once peacefully occupying their lands and honouring their coexistence with nature and with one another as an expression of their spirituality. From this peaceful coexistence with one another and living in harmony with nature, indigenous peoples have developed their own ways of life (Malanes, 2002). They have their own sets of political structures, governance and economic systems (Binder & Binder, 2016) and knowledge and practices that have governed their survival up to the present (Cajete, 1999). As Smith (2012) argues:

> "*We have a different epistemological tradition which frames the way we see the world, the way we organize ourselves in it, the questions we ask and the solutions we seek*" (p. 187).

Then the colonisers came into indigenous territories and started imposing their ways of life, such as their laws and political structures amongst indigenous peoples (Anaya, 2004). According to him, these laws were in conflict with the way indigenous peoples lived their lives in relation to one another. Keal (2003) argues that the colonisers have then made use of power, violence and force to conquer indigenous territories. Other means of colonisation were through the use of religion, or what Constantino and Constantino (1978) and Pomeroy (1970) referred to as the use of the "Cross and the sword."

Once they had settled in indigenous peoples' lands, they started introducing their own forms of governance (Bagamaspad, Hamada-Pawid, & Balangoy, 1985). This created a tension between the indigenous peoples themselves whose leaders were either assimilated or annihilated, depending on how which sides they have taken vis-à-vis the colonisers (Pineda-Tinio, 2002). Yu (2006) states that, in the case of the Philippines, the existing indigenous leadership has been replaced by the colonisers' ways of governance. He adds that the Datus or indigenous leaders, were either converted and compensated as village chiefs under the coloniser's regime, or killed for their resistance.

This historical beginning of the oppression of indigenous peoples continues to manifest in the current dispossession of indigenous peoples of their lands (Robertson, 2005). These are also expressed in their personal relationships, where they have become victims of discrimination from government services (Harris, Tobias, Jeffreys, Waldegrave, Karlsen, & Nazroo, 2006) and structural violence (Madison, 2005). Other forms of indigenous peoples' oppression were expressed in government policies and programmes, where massive political inequalities are enacted against indigenous peoples. For instance, Durey and Thompson (2012) talk about the health disparities and inequalities against the indigenous peoples of Australia. Kirmayer, Brass, and Tait (2000) note the same thing in Canada, where they mention the stark inequalities in terms of indigenous peoples' access to social and health services.

Anaya (2004) asserts that laws which have been crafted for indigenous peoples had become the foundation and root causes of all the inequalities and oppression that indigenous peoples experience. He adds that these laws have legitimised the injustices committed against indigenous peoples. This is reflected in the case of indigenous peoples in the Philippines whose oppression largely emanates from oppressive laws that have stripped them of their land and other resources (Razon & Hensman, 1976). But, Briskman (2014) notes that indigenous peoples did not just remain passive about their oppression. Rather, they have fought and resisted. Smith (2012) sums this up by saying that indigenous peoples continue to struggle to oppose the forces that also continue to oppress and marginalise them.

2.2.1.2 Indigenous peoples' struggles

Indigenous literatures highlight indigenous peoples' struggles to resist the forces that go against their established ways of life (Molintas, 2004). These struggles are expressed in different forms of resistance such as in efforts to reclaim stolen identities and territories (Lawrence, 2003), through asserting their rights in international tribunals (Anaya, 2004) and also in efforts to indigenise research such as Smith's (2012) Decolonizing Methodologies. An example of indigenous peoples' ongoing struggles to reclaim their stolen identities and lands can be seen in Lukacs and Pasternak (2014) concerning the Supreme Court of Canada's ruling that granted an aboriginal title to the Tsilhqot'in nation to 1,750 sq km of their land in central British Columbia.

Whilst this did not provide for absolute ownership of the land, he maintains that the ruling granted the indigenous peoples the right to use and manage the land, including the economic benefits that are derived from its utilisation. Smith also provides several classic examples of indigenous peoples' struggles in their continuing experiences with oppression and inequalities in her book on "Decolonizing Methodologies."

Coates (2004) provides a summary of some of the indigenous peoples and their struggles across the globe. These examples show that indigenous peoples, although they are scattered around the world, have some common issues – the protection of their lands from all forms of dispossession, which includes previous oppressive treaties with colonisers and what he calls the "final invasions" in the form of development and exploitation of natural resources (pp. 203-229). This reality affirms what Poole (1995) argues – that land is the base for indigenous peoples' relationships and survival. Whyte (2017) mentions that, in the United States, the Native Americans continue to struggle for the protection of their lands and resources as well as their identity and spirituality that are connected to these. He cites the example of the recent resistance against the Dakota Access Pipeline Project, which affects the Standing Rock Indian Reservation of the Sioux Nation. Cajete (2000) argues that indigenous peoples' spirituality is intrinsically connected to their land. Indigenous peoples in Canada face the same struggles for the protection of their land and natural resources (Anaya & Williams, 2001). The same thing is true with indigenous peoples in the Philippines, whose daily struggles have something to do with the protection of their rights over their lands and the issues of conflicts and poverty that emanate from the dispossession of their lands (Molintas, 2004).

In relation to these indigenous peoples' struggles are the risks of disasters, which are also known to emanate from the extractive and exploitative operations of development projects (see Wisner, 2017) in indigenous lands. This argument debunks previous beliefs that natural hazards are one of the main causes of the destruction of indigenous peoples' lands (see Holden & Jacobson, 2012). Holden and Jacobson add that indigenous peoples' struggles in relation to disasters are those extractive projects and activities that introduce environmental risks. Coming from this, it is important to have a clearer and better understanding of disasters in relation to

development issues affecting indigenous peoples.

2.2.2 Disasters, development and risks as indigenous peoples' issue

Just like the term "indigenous peoples," disasters are also defined in many different ways (see Perry, 2007; Quarantelli, 2005). The Sendai Framework defines disasters as:

> "*A serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society at any scale due to hazardous events interacting with conditions of exposure, vulnerability and capacity, leading to one or more of the following: human, material, economic and environmental losses and impacts*" (UNISDR, n.d, n.p.)

DRR scholars such as Quarantelli (2005) and Perry (2007) stress that understanding the different definitions of disasters needs to consider several things such as the people who are defining these and the context from which they come. They emphasised that the ongoing social construction of disasters provides a better understanding of the term and facilitates a consensus on the definition of the term that will be helpful for practical applications. Along with these conversations are the different paradigms of disasters (McEntire, Fuller, Johnston & Weber, 2002) that are essential in understanding indigenous peoples' perspectives on disasters. Among these are two major paradigms that emanate from the social sciences, particularly from Geography (Gaillard, 2010).

These paradigms are: the hazard paradigm and the vulnerability paradigm. Gaillard (2010) argues that the hazard paradigm emerged from the "proponents of the dominant." According to him, this paradigm "asserts that disasters result from extreme and rare natural hazards that affected people fail to 'adjust' because their perception of risk associated to these natural events is insufficient" (p. 93). This paradigm manifests in dominant disaster risk reduction, where responses are based on technocratic approaches as a means of countering these extreme forces of nature (Hewitt, 1983, 1995). Gaillard (2010) adds further that such a paradigm is also apparent in "[m]ost national risk reduction policies [that] still rely on command-in-control and top-down frameworks, which emphasize scientific framework and national intervention at

the detriment of local actions" (p. 94). The term "natural disasters," which emerged from the dominant/hazard paradigm is widely used in government policies and programmes on DRR – thus, further encouraging technocratic responses and approaches to disasters and DRR (Hewitt, 1995).

DRR scholars such as Bankoff (2001), Hewitt (1983, 1995) and Wisner (1995) have raised concerns over dominant literatures that have been associated with indigenous peoples' vulnerabilities to their close relationship to nature. They argue that such dominant perspectives support the conceptualisation that disasters emanate from nature, and therefore indigenous peoples are the most vulnerable sectors of the society to disasters given their proximity to nature. Bankoff (2001) and Hewitt (1995) acknowledge that, whilst this is true to some extent, this dominant perspective omits the important dimension of analysing disasters as social and political issues. This perspective overlooks the potentials and capacities of indigenous peoples that are important in planning and programming (Gaillard, 2010) in DRR and in disaster scenarios.

The hazards paradigm undermines the value of the social understanding of vulnerabilities to disasters (Bankoff, 2001; Hewitt, 1983; Wisner, 1995). It encourages the view of blaming nature for disasters and frames humans as "passive victims of natural and technological agents" (Hewitt, 1995, p. 320). The issues of injustices as reflected in the underlying social, political and economic roots of risks that result in disasters are therefore overlooked (Tierney, 2014). Moreover, it disregards indigenous peoples' own knowledge and capacity for DRR (Mercer et al., 2010) and perpetuates the framing of [indigenous] peoples as victims of "natural hazards" with limited or no capacity to cope with the forces of nature that require advanced technological solutions (Hewitt, 1983). This then justifies powerful organisations and companies continuing to impose their capitalist interests that sustain the social and economic vulnerabilities of indigenous peoples that become exacerbated by natural hazards (Wisner, 2003a).

Drawing on Hewitt (1983) and Wisner (2004), Gaillard (2010) states that the vulnerability paradigm "asserts that disasters primarily affect those who are marginalized in everyday life and who lack access to resources and means of protection that are available to others with more

power" (p. 93). Paramount to this paradigm is an understanding of peoples' livelihood and what this means to social vulnerabilities that may become exacerbated during disasters (Cannon, Twigg & Rowell, 2003). Bankoff (2001) also talks about other forms of vulnerabilities such as oppressive land laws and policies that have denied people from mountainous and coastal areas to secure their homes in better places that are not easily affected by natural hazards such as floods and landslides. The vulnerability paradigm can be further explained by analysing vulnerabilities in the context of the issues of injustices that are amplified by natural hazards (Blaikie, Cannon, Davis & Wisner, 2014).

2.2.2.1 Indigenous peoples' vulnerabilities

Understanding the vulnerability paradigm in the context of indigenous peoples requires some background on issues of development that were known to be common sources of struggles for indigenous peoples across the globe as these impact on their survival as a people (see Alcorn, 1993; Bodley, 2014; Mudd, 1985). Furthermore, indigenous peoples' vulnerabilities can be analysed in the context of the social perspectives concerning disasters (Hewitt, 1995). This perspective provides an understanding of indigenous peoples' issues of survival such as development and its associated risks (see Bodley, 2014; Broad & Cavanagh, 1993, 2009; Wisner, 2004).

Development aggression, which is defined as an unjust and enforced form of development amongst indigenous peoples (Nadeau, 2005) has been criticised as a major source of disaster risk for indigenous communities (Holden and Jacobson, 2012). Holden and Jacobson maintain that, contrary to powerful companies' claims that mining (as a form of development aggression) facilitates development, this had actually been amongst the major causes of disasters amongst indigenous communities in the Philippines. Broad and Cavanagh (1993) affirm this by saying that development efforts have changed not only the physical but also the social landscape of indigenous peoples' lives in the Philippines such as displacements resulting from large-scale corporate projects and their activities. Mirza and Mustafa (2016) add that development processes have also affected the relationships of indigenous peoples and commodified resources such as water, which used to be communally shared and which sustained their solidarity.

Vulnerability to disasters emanate from such changes, especially for indigenous peoples whose resilience is built on collective relationships (Dekens, 2007b).

Another focus on the analysis of how development contributes to indigenous peoples' vulnerabilities is the issue of landlessness and the oppressive land laws that perpetuate this (see Bankoff, 2001; Molintas, 2004; Razon and Hensman, 1976). Marlowe (2014) maintains that people are affected by disasters in different ways. Indeed, as Bankoff (2001) states, those who do not have the choice to build their houses in better and safer spaces suffer most of the impacts of disasters. Indigenous peoples are historically known to have been dispossessed of their lands and resources by the state and powerful corporations (Bodley, 2014). This has resulted in them being rendered landless in their own homes (Molintas, 2004) and some of them are forced to settle in coastal areas and mountainous terrain that can become risky in relation to natural hazards (Bankoff, 2001). This is compounded by a lack of social protection and benefits for indigenous peoples (Gaillard, 2010) whom the law considers "illegal" occupants (Molintas, 2004) of the coastal areas and mountainsides to which they have been pushed away in order to pave the way for development aggression (Broad & Cavanagh, 1993).

Furthermore, Balay-As, Marlowe and Gaillard (2018) argue that indigenous peoples' increasing vulnerability to the effects of natural hazards can be seen in an analysis of capitalist pressures. In their study, they maintain that indigenous farmers claim that they have become increasingly vulnerable to the effects of natural hazards. But, aside from the increasingly erratic pattern of typhoons and the changes in the natural environment, they underscored the importance of analysing these indigenous farmers' alleged vulnerabilities in the context of social and economic factors. As Wisner et al. (1977) argue, the capitalist sector, which is mainly interested in the production of a surplus had impacted on the way people maximised their local knowledge for sustainable agriculture. den Biggelaar (1991) adds the importance of local knowledge in sustainable agriculture, which he says often works better than the technological solutions aimed at solving local farmers' problems. Wisner (2003a) underscores the injustices in the capitalist form of production where producers of food ironically end up not having anything to eat because most of the profits of their labour go to their landlords.

Unfortunately, Natarajan-Tschannerl (2010) argues, these capitalist interests resist change and are perpetuated by the owners of private resources and knowledge. Therefore, she argues that responses and approaches to these issues have to create a new consciousness that counteracts the false consciousness that have been created by powerful corporations and institutions to serve their own capitalist self-interest.

Beyond the dominant constructs of indigenous vulnerabilities, these issues of injustice that are often exacerbated by natural hazards need to be challenged in DRR responses and approaches (see Marlowe, 2014). It is in grounding one's DRR responses and approaches to the political, social and economic issues that promote the vulnerability of indigenous peoples and communities that disaster injustices and the uncritical approaches to DRR can be challenged (Wisner, 2010; Wisner, Gaillard & Kelman, 2015). Moreover, Marlowe (2014) maintains that the different voices and perspectives have to be considered by disaster responders. Within this context, indigenous peoples' understanding and perspectives about their vulnerabilities have to be reflected in disaster response and management. This will be discussed further in the next section about DRR in the Philippines.

2.2.3 DRR in the Philippines

The Philippines is among the countries that respond quickly to international conventions and agreements. This includes adopting the Hyogo Framework and the Sendai Framework of 2015 for DRR that followed (see Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), 2015). In fact, the Hyogo Framework had become the primary basis of government laws and pronouncements for DRR projects and activities such as the Philippine disaster management act of 2010 (see NDRRMC, n.d.). This framework had also been adopted by the local government units in their budgeting and implementation of DRR activities (DBM, 2015). The government structure that implements DRR programmes reflects this top-down approach, where programme guidelines and procedures are usually downloaded from national agencies such as the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) down to the local government units. Whilst this adherence to international commitments can be lauded by the international

community, it has resulted in a technocratic DRR framework (see Kelman & Glantz, 2015) in the country.

Whilst DRR in the Philippines seems to cover a wide range of concerns such as livelihoods, participation and indigenous peoples as reflected in the Philippine Disaster Management Act of 2010, these are often implemented in a tokenistic fashion. In response, DRR scholars and practitioners advocate for genuine local participation (Cadag & Gaillard, 2013; Gaillard & Maceda, 2009) and the integration of indigenous knowledge to scientific knowledge in DRR (Gaillard & Mercer, 2013). Whilst this endeavour is appreciated by some, and adopted by a number of local government units and nongovernment organisations, a continuing advocacy and support mechanism is necessary to institutionalise this in government and nongovernment DRR programmes and activities.

In the case of nongovernment organisations, Luna (2002) maintains that these institutions are more flexible in terms of their DRR programme designs and frameworks. This implies that these nongovernment organisations are not as bound as the government to international frameworks and their top-down and technocratic approaches. However, as Ebrahim (2003) notes, nongovernment organisations that rely on external funding are often accountable to their donors and are therefore more likely to adopt their programme design and frameworks that also follow a top-down process. Garilao (1987) adds that nongovernment organisations in developing countries are being used by donor agencies simply as implementers of their projects and activities with indicators of accomplishments already pre-identified by these donors. Luna (2002) argues that well-meaning nongovernment organisations in the Philippines would choose to reject the funding if a potential conflict of interests arose between them and their funding agencies. In another paper, Luna (2013) maintains that nongovernment organisations in the Philippines support a number of community-based DRR management efforts that provide bottom-up lessons and insights on how communities' resources and capacities can be mobilised for DRR. Such processes conform with the two-way approach for the integration of local capacities to scientific knowledge, where both forms of knowledge converge. DRR in the Philippines is largely based on a top-down and technocratic approach. However, as Marlowe

(2014) notes, it is also necessary to mention the ongoing efforts of several actors and disaster responders to make DRR more meaningful and empowering to those who are involved, including indigenous peoples.

2.2.3.1 DRR and indigenous peoples

Indigenous peoples in the Philippines make up a small portion of the nation's overall population (NSCB, 2015). As early authors and historians of indigenous peoples in the Philippines argue, this numerical minority contributed to their oppression and marginalisation as a people (Razon & Hensman, 1976; Scott, 1979). In terms of DRR, government laws and programmes do not spell out specific projects or activities for indigenous peoples (see NDRRMC, n.d.). And, whilst indigenous peoples in the Philippines have a wealth of indigenous knowledge and practices that can be mobilised in government DRR planning and response (Balay-As et al., 2018; Gaillard, 2007), these are often marginalised with the preference of technocratic responses to disasters over indigenous knowledge (Hilhorst et al., 2015).

Within indigenous laws for indigenous peoples such as the 1997 Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act of the Philippines, DRR is also not mentioned. One of the major provisions, which is the right to ancestral domains, does mention disasters, where it says that indigenous peoples have the right to return to their ancestral domain in cases of temporary displacements such as when they are affected by disasters. Other than this, DRR is not mentioned elsewhere in this law (see Congress of the Philippines, 1997). This reflects that DRR and indigenous peoples still need to go a long way in the Philippines to be able to realise full integration in government laws and programmes. In the same way, it is also a reflection of the lack of research literature on DRR and indigenous peoples that may serve as a foundation for the formulation of policies and programmes that incorporate indigenous peoples' perspectives, responses and approaches to disasters.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

This section presents the theoretical framework of the study. It provides an understanding

of the often essentialised binaries such as the Western/indigenous perspectives of disasters through a critical ethnography lens. These binaries are further discussed using the anti-oppressive framework of social work.

2.3.1   Critical ethnography: Ethics and performance

Critical ethnography is conventional ethnography with a political purpose (Thomas, 1993). It is a method, ethics and performance in research that challenges the status quo and creates a possibility for a new consciousness with an emancipatory purpose. It contributes to the construction of liberating knowledge and the debates of social justice (Madison, 2005). As a theoretical framework for this study, critical ethnography, as a form of ethics and performance, seeks to negotiate the space in between the Western/indigenous discourses on disasters. It provides a theoretical framework on how an insider indigenous research on disasters can become an ethics and performance to question, dialogue and act upon, alongside others, issues of oppression and injustices (see Conquergood, 1986) that result in the vulnerabilities of indigenous peoples to hazards.

2.3.2   A critique of the notion of objectivity and subjectivity: Negotiating the western/indigenous perspectives on disasters

Critical ethnography, as an ethics and performance, negotiates the binaries that have been created between Western/scientific and indigenous/traditional disaster perspectives. Agrawal (1995) maintains that the dichotomy between indigenous and scientific knowledge only further disenfranchises those who are already marginalised. The same applies in the context of disasters and DRR. Mercer et al. (2010) argue that the suppression of indigenous knowledge by a more powerful or superior knowledge, which has become then basis for institutional DRR responses and approaches, impacts on the indigenous peoples who do not have access to scientific knowledge and approaches. Critical ethnography deconstructs the binary between indigenous and scientific knowledge through what Madison (2005) refers to as a critique of the notions of objectivity and subjectivity, where objectivity is associated with scientific knowledge and subjectivity with indigenous knowledge. Madison (2005) adds that critical ethnography has

an ethical responsibility to "address processes of unfairness or injustice within a particular lived domain" (p. 5). If the constructed binaries such as objectivity/scientific/western/outsider and subjectivity/indigenous/traditional/insider have resulted in injustices and the further marginalisation of indigenous peoples as Agrawal (1995) claims, then it is the responsibility of critical ethnography to negotiate this (Madison, 2005).

Instead of reifying these binaries, critical ethnography is concerned with a continuing dialogue and action on the underlying issues that created the binaries. As Madison (2005) notes, "critical ethnography is always a meeting of multiple-sides in an encounter with and among the others, one in which there is negation and dialogue toward substantial and viable meanings that make a difference in the other's world" (p. 9). This fits with the principles of the integration of indigenous and scientific knowledge and approaches as a possibility for deconstructing the binaries between the Western and indigenous perspectives in DRR (see Balay-As et al., 2018; Gaillard & Mercer, 2013; Mercer et al., 2010). At the same time, critical ethnography also emphasises positionality, which is an important concept for indigenous insider research.

2.3.3 Positionality: negotiating power and power relations in the integration of indigenous and Western/scientific knowledge and perspectives on DRR

Madison (2005) defines positionality as the researcher's acknowledgement of "power, privilege and biases just as [they] are denouncing the power structures that surround [their] subjects" (p. 7). This positionality is essential in negotiating power and power relations that are inherent in the dichotomy between Western and indigenous knowledge and perspectives on DRR (Mercer et al., 2010). Thomas (1993) adds that positionality concerns gazing back at one's self and acknowledging one's position of authority and the accountability to the people being represented or whose stories are being interpreted. Balay-As et al. (2018) underscore the roles of those facilitating the integration of indigenous and scientific knowledge in DRR in ensuring that issues of power and privilege are acknowledged and responded to in the process. This includes the power relations, not only amongst the participants, but of all DRR actors including the facilitators of the integration process (Marlowe, 2014).

Positionality in this sense guards against the imposition of one's own subjective perspectives and biases through the power and privilege that are provided by one's position of authority (Madison, 2005). It negotiates issues of power and injustices that may arise from the integration process (Gaillard & Mercer, 2013). Positionality is essentially relevant as the integration might harbour some issues of having to fit within someone else's world or framework. An indigenous insider critical ethnography on disasters acknowledges what Madison (2005) argues as one's positionality needing to reflect the subjectivity of those who are being represented in research. Therefore, guided by the principles of reflexivity (Madison, 2005), indigenous peoples' stories counter the dominant narratives that reinforce their oppression and marginalisation (Smith, 2012), which result in disaster injustices are highlighted in an insider critical ethnography.

In summary, critical ethnography's ethics and performance as a theoretical framework for this study draws on Conquergood' s (1986) concept that research is a performance or action to emancipate humans from oppressive and unjust relationships and practices. As an ethics and performance, this critical ethnography on indigenous peoples and disasters fills a perceived gap in the literature with the narratives of indigenous peoples' through an insider's perspectives as acting for a liberating agenda that addresses issues of injustices in a disasters context. This liberating agenda relates to the theories and practice of the anti-oppressive social work that supports the principles of critical ethnography.

2.3.4   Anti-oppressive social work

The "social justice" foundation of social work can be quickly drawn from its global definition by the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) which states:

> "*Social work is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work. Underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities and indigenous knowledge, social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing.*" (n.d.)

This definition is supported by various research in the social work literature that emphasises social justice as a major foundation of the profession (see Briskman, 2014; Dominelli & Campling, 2002; Ife, 2001). Whilst there are acknowledgements that social justice is a contested term (Irizarry et al., 2016; Marlowe, 2014), one of the ways by which this can be reflected in social work can be in relation to rights and access (Morgaine, 2014) in light of the issues of oppression, inequalities and marginalisation that vulnerable and disadvantaged people often experience (see Laird, 2008). In order to further reflect on social justice and how this might resonate in social work, a look at the anti-oppressive foundation of the profession might be significant.

2.3.5   Anti-oppressive social work practice

Dominelli (1996) argues that the anti-oppressive practice of social work hinges on social justice as a means of attaining a more permanent response to unequal relations and systems. She maintains that the grounding of the social work practice to social justice can potentially transform the different forms of oppressions that humans experience in their daily lives. Rather than simply focusing on palliative solutions to issues, she argues that social work must engage the clients themselves in "participatory and transformative ways" that challenge and transform the "forces within society that benefit from and perpetuate inequity and oppression" (p. 6). In doing so, Morgaine and Capous-Desyllas (2014) believe social work alone cannot attain this purpose, and thus, they underscore the need to work with other professions, besides the clients themselves.

In the context of DRR with indigenous peoples, this anti-oppressive social work practice can be examined by looking at Briskman's (2014) contention that indigenous peoples and their knowledges are still being oppressed "at the levels of policy and in everyday practice" (p. 19). The dominant DRR literature reflects this reality as well, where indigenous knowledges are taken as inferior to scientific knowledge and approaches. As a profession that plays a significant role in disaster management (Pyles, 2009), social work needs to reflect on its justice foundation in its DRR practice with indigenous peoples. Morgaine and Capous-Desyllas (2014) echo what

other authors, such as Irizarry et al. (2016) and Marlowe (2014), have said about the often varied and challenging interpretations of social justice. They add that an anti-oppressive and liberating social work practice with indigenous peoples needs to acknowledge what social justice means to them. Indigenous peoples' perspectives and practice of social justice must therefore be considered in social work practice on DRR with indigenous peoples.

In relation to this discussion, Morgaine and Capous-Desyllas (2014) add that the anti-oppressive practice of social work has been "criticised as another example of western hegemony" (p. 27). They raise the contention about the Western framing of social justice and emphasise the role of social work in negotiating this alongside other understandings of the terms. Additionally, Caputo (2002) warns about the potential of social justice to be used against those whom it was intended to emancipate by those who are in powerful positions. Therefore, it is crucial to consider what Morgaine (2014) notes:

> "*Positioning social work in a social justice framework is a hollow exercise if applied with no critical reflection about what social justice means—particularly for those most intimately affected by injustice and for social workers engaging in daily practice with groups that have been marginalized and disenfranchised*" (p. 16).

Morgaine's statement about social justice is particularly essential to the practice of diversity in social work. Diversity does not only mean working with different clients who may have different understandings and quests for social justice, but also with different partners, such as institutions and corporations, to facilitate clients' access to resources and opportunities in response to their issues and concerns. In the context of disasters, Marlowe (2014) maintains that social workers work with different actors who come together as responders. This is in addition to the diverse people in a certain community who, as Marlowe notes, can be affected differently by disasters. Social work practice has to critically consider these forms of diversity and ensure that it facilitates appropriate and relevant responses to disasters that resonate with the goals and aspirations of people and communities for a better and more empowering DRR.

The practice of diversity in social work is further explored in the context of cultural competence in the section that follows.

2.3.5.1 Social work, diversity and cultural competence

The practice of diversity in social work is emphasised in the literature as an approach to being culturally competent (Weaver, 1999). Being culturally competent enables social workers to reflect on appropriate approaches and responses to clients' individual contexts and situations (Harrison, Wodarski & Thyer, 1992). Furthermore, Garcia and Soest (2006) maintain that the cultural competence of social workers is essential in understanding the roots of inequalities that affect individuals, groups and communities, and how these affect them differently. Gray, Coates and Yellow Bird (2008) add that social work responses to these forms of inequalities need to be culturally grounded in order to be relevant to a certain population's context. Cultural competence is, thus, regarded in social work as a necessary means of transforming oppressive and unjust systems into just possibilities.

However, Ife (2012) argues that social workers need to be careful with the potential of cultural competence and the practice of diversity. He discusses this within the context of culturalism. He maintains that "[c]ulturalism reifies culture, and in effect allows the continuation of the most abusive practices, all in the name of cultural integrity" (p. 68). In their desire to "embrace diversity and to engage in culturally sensitive practice," he warns that social workers may unconsciously be promoting culturalism that believes that anything that is cultural is good. In indigenous peoples' context, Keddie, Gowlett, Mills, Monk and Renshaw (2013) maintain that culturalism essentialises unnecessary binaries that prevent the exploration of more meaningful alternatives for indigenous peoples and their communities. Significantly, Ife adds that a social justice informed social work practice must also recognise the fact that there are people who value culturalism and that this impacts on their welfare and wellbeing. Thus, instead of simply rejecting this, he challenges social workers to engage in critical discourses around this to inform their practice on diversity. In light of this, he asserts that social workers must be able to understand that there are cultural meanings and spaces that remain to be "an arena of struggle, contest and change. . ." He goes on to add that social workers must understand

that "there are diverse views within the cultures" by which a certain practice occurs (p. 69). Therefore, he argues that it is important for social workers to consider that culture is dynamic and that it is constantly changing across time.

Shore Bradd (1998) adds that culture is not universal. This means that the belief and values that are held by one group within a specific cultural community may not be necessarily true for other members or groups of that community. Ife (2012) maintains that understanding culture to be dynamic and "pluralistic" is essential for social workers to frame their practice for diversity (p. 69). He explains this in the context of human rights. Whist human rights are universal, he claims that this may be differently "defined," "realised," "guaranteed," and "protected" . . . "in different contexts" (p. 70). This also applies to social justice, where social workers need to contextualise what these mean within specific groups of people in communities and how they might envision realising this (Morgaine, 2014).

Meanwhile, Anderson and Carter (2003) in their book, Diversity Perspectives for Social Work Practice, state that social workers need to be adept at working with diversity. They explain that social workers need to be able to learn from the diverse stories of their diverse clients and the different ways by which they have used their capacities to respond to difficult life situations. She encourages social workers to utilise this learning and further enhance social work practice in diversity contexts. She adds that social workers must also be able to recognise the diversity within and the diversity between people. This concept allows social workers to be able to deal with diverse interpersonal issues a person might be experiencing in addition to external issues of diversity that social workers need to recognise as they work with people affected by disasters. As Marlowe (2014) notes, disaster situations might further complicate other issues people and communities are already experiencing.

2.3.5.2   Social work and indigenous peoples

Acknowledging that social work needs to consider several areas of diversity in its practice, this section is focused on its work with indigenous peoples. The recognition of indigenous

knowledge as one of the 'theories' that guide its practice alongside social justice (see IFSW definition of social work) encourages a different lens in looking at indigenous peoples whom mainstream welfare systems have often shaped as vulnerable and problematic clients (Gray et al., 2013). Social justice within this context encourages social work to promote indigenous peoples' rights and capacities to transform their own lives (Briskman, 2014). The recognition of indigenous peoples' rights and capacities challenges what Briskman calls the dominant practice of social work that frames indigenous peoples within a welfare-based paradigm. Significant to this conversation is Gray et al. (2013) who argue that, despite the recognition by governments of the marginalisation and colonisation of indigenous peoples, social work has not developed its knowledge and approaches alongside indigenous peoples. Moreover, they assert that social work is still largely dominated by the "modern paradigm. . . which [has] more often than not, been ineffective in dealing with the needs of Indigenous Peoples" (p.49). They maintain that, despite the anti-oppressive efforts of social workers and social work around the globe, "governments continue to problematize Indigenous issues rather than accepting them as a matter of national responsibility" (p. 58).

Gray et al. (2013) propose that a social work practice that is based on the principles of social justice goes beyond seeing indigenous peoples as problematic groups and solving their problems with "appropriate" welfare programmes and services to a critical analysis of social issues and problems affecting them. They emphasised the need for social work to incorporate a sound historical grounding of indigenous peoples' issues and reflect this recognition in its work for social justice. Additionally, Briskman (2014) calls for a critical analysis of how the current systems, structures and relationships perpetuate these issues.

In doing so, social work needs to explore meaningful and liberating ways of responding to these oppressive issues and inequalities with indigenous peoples themselves as the major agents of the change they want for their lives. This form of practice reframes social work practice from being "welfare-based" to a "process that encompasses social justice and human rights" (Briskman, 2014, p. 230). Social work practice with indigenous peoples that is based upon social justice goes beyond the provision of welfare services to indigenous peoples to challenging

oppressive systems and relationships. This allows a critical understanding of issues (such as poverty) arising from what Briskman describes as "dispossession and disempowerment" that continue to affect indigenous peoples and their communities (p. 38). Doing so encourages social workers to learn from the stories and experiences of indigenous peoples and their communities and incorporate the meanings they derive from critically engaging with them to their professional practice (Ife, 2001).

Working with indigenous peoples in the context of disasters offers various lessons for social work to challenge oppressive oppression and inequalities. For instance, the framing of the alleged vulnerabilities of indigenous peoples to natural hazards to the kind of environment they occupy (see Blolong, 1996), might necessitate their relocation (displacement) as a DRR measure. This was the case for the indigenous *Kankanaey* in one of the villages in Kibungan, where the local social work office was tasked with chairing the inter-municipal committee that was responsible for the relocation process of indigenous families affected by sinking grounds. For these *Kankanaey* families, their relocation was a form of displacement not only from their homes but from their relationships and sources of livelihood. As one of their elders argued, this form of displacement impacts more on their welfare and survival than the actual threats of natural hazards.

Given a disaster scenario such as this one, social work needs to go back to its social justice founding principles and reflect this in its practice (Foley, 2002). The threats of natural hazards to indigenous communities must not be taken for granted. As Hewitt (1983) argues, being responsive to these threats is also important in building indigenous peoples' resilience to disasters. However, social work with a social justice lens in DRR must be able to acknowledge other issues that indigenous peoples might be concerned about, such as the threats in everyday life (see Voorst, Wisner, Hellman & Nooteboom, 2015). This allows DRR practice (including social work) to be critical in balancing perspectives and responses to the threats of daily life with the actual threats of natural hazards (Gaillard, 2007). In other words, social work in this context must be able to critically engage with the use of differing perspectives in understanding and responding to indigenous peoples' issues and vulnerabilities to disasters. Doing so allows

social work to facilitate a just and more meaningful DRR with indigenous peoples.

Furthermore, social work with indigenous communities must assist in the deconstruction of the binaries that hamper the realisation of social justice specifically in disaster contexts. The multiple issues of differentiation emerge amongst indigenous peoples and these further oppress and marginalise them. Amongst these alleged binaries are those between indigenous and scientific knowledge in DRR. DRR scholars such as Mercer et al. (2010) have underscored the marginalisation of indigenous knowledge as a result of this dichotomy, which can add to the vulnerabilities of indigenous peoples to natural hazards. This happens especially when indigenous peoples abandon their own DRR knowledge and practices in favour of scientific approaches (Hilhorst et al., 2015). The commercialisation of these scientific approaches to disasters makes these inaccessible to certain populations such as indigenous peoples.

A critically informed social work practice with indigenous peoples needs to deconstruct these binaries in DRR. Smith (2012) asserts that indigenous peoples have a wealth of knowledge and capacities that allow them to drive and sustain their own ways of life. However, as Briskman (2014) argues, their historical oppression and their marginalisation in the current system continue to prevent them from fully discovering these strengths and capacities. In the context of DRR, this results, not only in the dissenfracnhisement of indigenous knowledge and approaches (Gaillard & Mercer, 2013), but also in the promotion and preference of Western scientific knowledge by indigenous peoples themselves (Hilhorst et al., 2015) that have benefited powerful corporations to perpetuate their agenda of 'development' in indigenous lands (Holden & Jacobson, 2012). Social work contributes in deconstructing these binaries by using Finn and Jacobson's (2003) just practice as contextualised in disaster scenarios (see Marlowe, 2014).

2.4 Conclusion

The discussion of indigenous peoples that focuses on their historical experiences of oppression and how they have responded (and continue to respond) to these issues highlights the strengths and capacities of indigenous peoples. Contrary to their portrayals in the dominant

literatures as vulnerable victims of outside incursions and influences, indigenous peoples have fought and continue to resist the imposition of oppressive agendas amongst them. This is reflected in several stories of indigenous peoples specifically concerning development aggression which affected the landscape of their indigenous life such as their physical environment, social relationships and solidarity. In return, these affected indigenous peoples' vulnerabilities to hazards as their collective resilience as a people is built on relationships and solidarity. As such, indigenous peoples often consider development aggression and the oppressive laws that support it as at the root of their vulnerabilities –hence, the necessity to address these social and political roots of indigenous vulnerabilities to hazards to ensure a more meaningful and empowering DRR with indigenous peoples. The theoretical framework of the study offers a discussion on the ethics and performance in critical ethnography as an essential element of insider research on disasters amongst indigenous peoples. The principles behind ethics and performance negotiate the space in between the Western/scientific and indigenous/traditional perspectives on disasters through a critique of objectivity/subjectivity and a closer examination of positionality in disaster research. This is further supported by the principles of the anti-oppressive theory and practice of social work that enables a discussion on how social justice in social work reinforces the emancipatory purpose of an insider critical ethnography.

Chapter 3

Between Two Worlds: Outsider/Insider Engagements and Critical Ethnography

I used to "build"' my *inatep*, a traditional *Kankanaey* house, when I was a child. I would gather dried twigs that had fallen from the trees and imagined that I was building the biggest and the most beautiful house in the village, where people could gather, eat, and sleep. The *inatep* is built starting with four pieces of wood that serve as pillars. It is impossible to build an *inatep* without first setting these four pieces of wood up. At first glance, these do not seem to provide enough foundation to build and sustain an entire house. Yet, the *inatep* is known to withstand time and the challenges of natural hazards. That is because the pillars are chosen from the finest varieties of wood in the village and these are carefully laced together to establish a solid foundation for the house. As *Kankanaey* elders say, one can only build a sturdy *inatep* from carefully selecting the tukod (pillars) and the art of constructing the other parts of the house follows from these.

I am not "building" *inatep* from dried twigs anymore. I am writing my doctoral thesis. But I find a powerful parallel between the building of the *inatep* and the methodology of this research, for the setting up of a good framework that is, the methodology, provides meaning for the rest of the project to spring from. If an *inatep* is built from four carefully chosen pillars, then Crotty (1998) suggests four elements in structuring research methodology: **epistemology,**

theoretical perspective, methodology, and **methods**. Like picking up those twigs to tie together to lay the foundation of my childhood *inatep*, I have structured my methodology according to these four elements. True to what the *Kankanaey* elders say, the building of the other parts of the house relies on the building of a sturdy pillar. Framing my methodology within Crotty's (1998, pp. 1-2) four elements thus gives me a "sense of stability and direction" in finding the value and meaning of the different experiences on my research journey.

Figure 3.1: The *inatep* or traditional *Kankanaey* house that stands on four pillars – Photo by Charleston Pasigon, June 2016 (Photo used with permission).

3.1   Epistemological Perspective

Constructionism understands that "reality" is constructed based upon people's perceptions, which are shaped by their experiences from interacting with others and the contexts in which these experiences occur (Crotty, 1998; Holstein & Gubrium, 2008). The construction of disasters amongst indigenous *Kankanaey* people is therefore influenced by their background

and experiences that continue to evolve as they relate with others both within and outside of their communities. These interactions are facilitated through different channels, such as their daily activities and processes as well as external influences like formal education, media, migration and resettlement processes. The diversity of the processes and influences that have shaped indigenous *Kankanaey* people's backgrounds and experiences suggests varied constructs about disasters amongst them. These different perspectives on disasters are discussed in the empirical findings of this research in chapters four, five and six.

In relation to these varied constructs on disasters, Schwandt (1994) argues that meanings and knowledge are shared. These shared meanings then shape mutual production and transmission of a shared body of knowledge. In this way, the construction of knowledge involves a social process by which collective meanings can be derived and passed onto others. This understanding has guided my research process in analysing how participants' diverse perspectives about disasters can encourage deeper reflections and dialogue on differing perspectives. From these dialogues, indigenous *Kankanaey* can then recreate a story and construct new meanings within a common space that uncover agendas of power, hegemony, oppression, and other forms of injustices that potentially lie beneath individually constructed perceptions (Crotty, 1998).

The reconstruction of these meanings manifested as the research participants gathered and told stories, chanted their thoughts and engaged in critical dialogues to come up with a collective project that challenged the unequal and oppressive relationships in DRR. As I participated in these dialogues and the reconstruction of meanings, I also had to unravel my own "inherited meanings" as a researcher (Crotty, 1998, p. 60). Doing this required significant reflection and reflexivity on my part, which guarded against the possibilities of imposing my own perceptions, values and ideologies as a certain "truth" and undermining any divergent views of my research participants (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009; Madison, 2005; Thomas, 1993; Wild, 1955). Understanding how meanings are constructed in accordance with the views of others addresses the issue of objectivity that is often raised in an insider research (Trainor & Graue, 2013).

3.1.1   Theoretical Perspective

Consistent with the tenets of constructionism, the theoretical perspective that informs this research is symbolic interactionism. Symbolic interaction postulates that one's action emerges from one's interpretation of the world (Hall, 1987). This means that the varied constructs of disasters amongst *Kankanaey* resonate with current DRR responses and approaches, including those by social work. In addition, Blumer (1969) and Madison (2005) maintain that interpretation comes from a "socialisation process," which is essential in developing a sense of one's self and our influencing actions. Through this socialisation process, one's perceptions are amalgamated with those of others to form shared meanings (Blumer, 2003). New meanings can thus be constructed and reveal the process to be highly dynamic, for as new interpretations emerge, new meanings, responses and actions develop (Madison, 2005).

Symbolic interactionism is useful in social work research and DRR practice amongst indigenous peoples. In this research, the socialisation process manifested in spaces where I had come together with the participants to negotiate individual perspectives on disasters. This is called an "interpretative process" by which the participants and the researcher embark on an experience of understanding situations according to how "others" view and hold meaning over this (Blumer, 1969, pp. 2-3). One's perceptions are then informed by those of others. Thus, indigenous *Kankanaey* perspectives and meanings about disasters feed the community development practice of social work and vice versa. Whilst there has been no "collective" interpretation that emerged from this process, the interpretative process provided a space for the participants to value each other's perspectives. This interpretive process was likewise important as it reflected the power and privilege inherent within *Kankanaey* communities that is bestowed upon some individuals through elevated political, social, and economic status. This was particularly important for knowing whose voices were the most powerful and for understanding how collective perspectives on disasters are formed in reality. The interpretive process was also important to me as a researcher in joining the ongoing conversations in their spaces of dialogues (Blumer, 1969). It was in these spaces that I negotiated my own personal notions of disasters that have also been shaped by my own background and experiences.

3.1.2 Methodology

Crotty (1998) maintains that ethnography is the methodology most aligned with constructionism and symbolic interaction. He suggests that this may be extended to critical ethnography, where the researcher does not stand only as an "objective and neutral observer," but works with their participants in addressing issues of "domestication and injustice" and in "deconstructing" oppressive thoughts through "intellectual rebellion" (Crotty, 1998, pp. 7-14). Foley (2002, p. 472) adds to this that critical ethnography aims to generate "the knowledge needed to foster a democratic society and a critical citizenry." The methodology of this research is critical ethnography. In many ways, critical ethnography is simply doing conventional ethnography with a liberating and anti-oppressive agenda (Madison, 2005). Madison further argues that critical ethnography is an appropriate methodology to consider reflexivity and reflect upon one's positionality in research. This is an essential dimension of this research, particularly considering that I am an insider in my own community.

To link this with constructionism and symbolic interaction, the construction of new meanings that embodies the thoughts of others through a "reflexive" (Howell, 2013, p. 125) and "interpretative process" (Blumer, 1969, p. 5) deconstructs issues of power and dominant thinking at an individual level. This power and dominance can be oppressive and imposing to others, but something that one might not be aware exists. This brings into conversation the potential of research amongst indigenous peoples to become oppressive (Smith, 2012) and how insider access can be helpful and meaningful in addressing this (Madison, 2005). This is not to essentialise indigeneity, but it illustrates how one's grounding in the meaning of certain cultural practices and processes is necessary in understanding the life of indigenous peoples in general (Murchison, 2010).

3.2 Accessing the community

Access is a fundamental element of critical ethnography (Denzin, 2003; Madison, 2005). In a most immediate sense, accessing indigenous communities requires one to be vigilant about physical signs within the environment that communicate significant meanings before

entering the community. Such is the case among the *Kankanaey* in the Philippines. There are instances when people, even insiders who have left the community for some time, are not allowed to re-enter the village. These are conveyed by signs like a feather tucked into sticks or twisted weeds, especially grasses, within the entrance to the villages. These prohibitions happen when the community is at rest, during times such as the few days following rice harvest season. Prohibitions could also happen after the death of an elder or after some other untoward experiences when the community goes through a collective grieving process.

Doing this critical ethnography allowed me to explore what access means to me as an indigenous insider and as a doctoral student bounded by the paradigm of academic research within a Western institution. In the eyes of Western research, accessing indigenous knowledge comes alongside the notion of "otherness" (Smith, 2012). Accessing "Other" knowledge(s) requires research to be grounded within strict ethical procedures established predominantly by research institutions (Madison, 2005; Noblit, Flores & Murillo, 2004). These ethical procedures set the parameters of working with holders of "different" knowledge (the other) and the one who makes sense of these knowledges (the researcher) (Davies, 2008; Denzin, 2003; Madison, 2005; Smith, 2012). In other words, the Western research ethics behind accessing indigenous ways of life and knowing have the potential of reinforcing otherness (Smith, 2012). As an indigenous *Kankanaey*, I acknowledge the privilege of being able to do this research with an academic institution overseas and also the risk of contributing to the construction of this sense of otherness. Guided by the principles of critical ethnography and indigenous research, I am, however, committed to using this privilege in a way that encourages indigenous peoples to speak on their behalf and narrate their stories the same way they would tell these stories to their children around a bonfire.

Accessing indigenous life and their communities means coming together and becoming one among them in their pursuit for social justice and human liberation (Bishop, 1999; Davies, 2008; Jones & Jenkins, 2008; Madison, 2005). As one embraces this sense of coming together, one becomes aware of one's own personal biases and practices that reinforce oppression and inequalities. Becoming one with others therefore implies sitting with others in their struggles

and hopes, for the development of more just and meaningful human relationships (Freire, 2004). Alongside this process, one does not make a distinction anymore between who narrates and who is narrated (Jones & Jenkins, 2008). Instead, critical ethnography describes this coming together as a dialogic process, where the researcher becomes a participant in the ongoing narratives of indigenous peoples who challenge the oppressive notions and practices made about them (Bishop, 1999; Denzin, 2008; Madison, 2005; Noblit et al., 2008).

Doing this critical ethnography as a doctoral student is an affirmation of my principles and commitments as an indigenous *Kankanaey* social worker. It is a journey alongside other indigenous peoples to reclaim the narratives about our ways of life and knowing that have been controlled by continuing colonisation (Smith, 2012). Like many other journeys, there will always be challenges and obstacles. I experienced getting lost while journeying the tricky trails of indigenous villages where I have worked in the past, but there were always landmarks that would bring me back in the right direction. As the elders in the villages would tell me, "If you cannot find a landmark to guide you, stay from where you have lost direction and do not attempt to find your way on your own. Someone will always find you there to show you the direction." The guiding principles of critical ethnography and the wisdom from indigenous research are the landmarks that will direct this process of reclaiming. It is also essential to recognise that this task cannot be done by one person alone. The necessity to build connections with others, organise, and take a collective action are thus the very essence of the indigenous way of doing things.

3.2.1 Re-embedding: an insider access

Locating myself in the ongoing story-telling of indigenous *Kankanaey* is not easy, even as an insider. Entering my indigenous community and gaining access to people's lives and stories required a process of "re-embedding." I draw some parallelisms between the experiences of this re-embedding process with the performance of chants by elders. As I watched and listened to a group of elders chanting in the *at-ato* (evening bonfires), I quickly understood that one could not simply jump in and participate when the chanting had already started. Three elders were chanting about people of the village in one of these *at-ato* who were a part of

my datacollection. A fourth one came in. For some time, he sat quietly on the outskirts of the bonfire and carefully listened to decipher the story being told. Slowly, he stepped into the bonfire and was acknowledged by the one who was chanting at that time. Then, he waited for a specific tempo before adding his voice into the chant. According to the elders, this process allows them to fully understand the story being told so that they can meaningfully contribute to the construction of knowledge that is being communicated in the chants.

Reflecting upon this wisdom by the elders, I asked myself when the right tempo was for me to participate in the indigenous peoples' ongoing conversations about disasters and their lives in general. More questions came up as I reflected upon another. Had I listened carefully enough to be able to meaningfully engage in telling people's stories? How would joining these ongoing *Kankanaey* chants about disasters as a researcher affect the rhythm of the conversation? These are all examples of "stepping back and listening" moments or my re-embedding, a process that I had to go through many times as I returned to my village to live my *Kankanaey* life, albeit still maintaining an emerging identity as an outsider researcher. Communal rituals consummated these processes, which allowed me and the villagers to establish common pathways for the research process and beyond.

3.2.2   Communal indigenous rituals: bond for authentic knowledge

Beyond being welcomed celebrations, the rituals performed during my stay in the village were also expressions of communal consent to the research. These paved the way for the conducting of my fieldwork activities. Each medium used in the rituals, including the offering of sacrificial animals, embodies elaborate meanings that are held sacred by *Kankanaey*. These rituals highlight indigenous *Kankanaey* research ethics and performance (Madison, 2005). The rituals are meant to evoke the integrity and accountability of the researcher and the research to the indigenous peoples participating in the study (Conquergood, 1986; Madison, 2005).

The offering of sacrificial animals in rituals allows for a process that generates the researcher's commitment and accountability to the stories of the indigenous peoples involved in the study (Denzin, 2003; Madison, 2005; Smith, 2012). These rituals are necessary procedures

to sanctify the purpose of the research and the researcher before access to indigenous knowledge(s) is provided. It is this "purification" that allows the entire research process to become part of the daily ceremonies that make up collective indigenous life (Wilson, 2008). The research process then becomes a shared communal experience. It is when the research becomes a communal journey that access to authentic indigenous knowledge slowly takes place.

Therefore, whilst there maybe information in indigenous communities that is available only to insiders, being one does not necessarily guarantee access to authentic indigenous knowledges (Madison, 2005). The amount of information and the authenticity of the knowledge(s) one can take from indigenous participants vastly depends on how well the researcher is able to build and sustain a genuine and trustful relationship with indigenous peoples. The communal rituals invite researchers to share the life of indigenous peoples, not only their issues and struggles, but also their strengths and hopes. Participating in these rituals can be an initial step for researchers to access indigenous communities. However, researchers need to carefully consider that these rituals are also meant to generate commitment, and every agreement that has been made within the process is considered sacred and binding. This pact is often considered by indigenous peoples to be more powerful than written agreements. Having said this, access to deeper levels of authenticity is facilitated by certain factors such as relationships, time, gender and many more.

3.2.3 Controlling access to indigenous knowledge and communities

Many hailed the passage of the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (IPRA) in the Philippines as a milestone in the life of indigenous peoples throughout the country (Malanes, 2002; Molintas, 2004). While remaining cognizant of the fact that the law has several loopholes, it cannot be denied that indigenous peoples in the Philippines have gained positive experiences from its passage and implementation. Among the important features of the law is its provision on the Free Prior and Informed Consent. This provides the power for indigenous peoples to decide for themselves whether or not to accept the entry of any projects and interventions from the outside (Carino, 2005). It is within the framework of this Free Prior and Informed

Consent that Administrative Order No. 1 of 2012 was brought out by the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) in 2012. This Administrative Order provides a guideline for the conduct of research and documentation activities among indigenous peoples. (NCIP, 2012, p. 1) states that it is the policy of the Commission to:

1. Promote, protect and recognize the rights of Indigenous Cultural Communities/Indigenous Peoples (ICCs/IPs) to cultural integrity and to prescribe protection mechanisms at the international and national levels and within the context of relevant customary laws;

2. Ensure and guarantee the due exercise by the concerned ICCs/IPs of their right to allow or reject, through free and prior informed consent (FPIC), research and documentation of their IKSPs and customary laws and their derivatives; and

3. Regulate the use of IKSPs and customary laws, and ensure that the ICCs/IPs benefit from the use of research output/outcome.

Bounded by this mandate, the NCIP subjected my research to this procedure. Initially, I did not want to go through this process. I thought that doing it in fact devalued the consent already provided directly by the villagers through the consultative dialogues and rituals of acceptance. However, I decided to follow these protocols set by the Administrative Order after dialogues with the elders and community leaders. The NCIP officials also encouraged me to follow the procedure for my legal protection as a researcher and also for the protection of the indigenous peoples involved in the research. For the purpose of satisfying government procedures and rules, I carried out another community consultation process with the NCIP. A certification precondition was then issued for my research. It states that I have satisfactorily complied with the requirements of Administrative Order No. 1 to conduct research with indigenous *Kankanaey* people. The certification also outlines three conditions for the research. These conditions include using the data only for academic purposes, presenting the final research output for validation, and providing copies of the final output to the communities involved.

I appreciate so much the support of the Kanakaney elders and leaders into my research who travelled far from the villages to the municipal hall to affirm the consent they provided in the previous consultations. Provincial and municipal officials were likewise present to witness the consultation process. Indigenous leaders who were selected by the communities and confirmed by the NCIP formulated the research conditions during the community consultation itself. I was asked to review and negotiate these conditions if they appeared unachievable to me as a researcher. I did not negotiate any of those conditions. They were, in fact, easy to fulfil when compared to the weight of the unwritten and unspoken research accountabilities derived from the awareness of indigenous ethics and values that I picked up in my journey to understand the lives and stories of the indigenous *Kankanaey* people.

The intention of the Administrative Order is good in the sense that it offers institutional support for the protection of indigenous knowledge(s). However, it also has the potential of devaluing the self-determination and the capacities of indigenous peoples to make choices and decisions on their own. Its potential to control access to indigenous communities and their narratives further reinforces the notion of indigenous powerlessness and therefore the need for a stronger institution to exist on their behalf (Bishop, 2002; Smith, 2012). Furthermore, it continues to frame the Other as an "ethnographic artefact," incapable of challenging and changing oppressive human conditions (Madison, 2005, p.10).

3.3   On being an insider/outsider

The bonfire started to glow in the twilight. Then, one by one, the villagers gathered around it. It was a usual bonfire session that I used to witness as a child growing up in this *Kankanaey* community. Whether it was for a traditional community engagement or a part of being a development worker, I had always felt that I was among my people when sharing and celebrating a collective life. This feeling embodies a sense of belonging, which I believe as communal life that holds no bounds. As a *Kankanaey*, I was taught that my relationship with others must be defined by being one with the community in all aspects of life. It was rice harvest season when I first re-entered my community as a researcher, and in accordance, I should be

one with my indigenous community in celebrating for the bountiful harvest of the year.

But the bonfire session during that night was not a celebration of thanksgiving for the rice harvest but rather, to "welcome" me as a researcher. This welcome ritual is often accorded to an outsider seeking access into the lives of the people and the community in general. I was back in my community as an outsider bounded by the ethical requirements of my academic research. My ambiguous identity in this bonfire session was an introduction into my research where I had to locate myself in every step of the journey. Noblit et al. (2004, p. 166) argue that an ethnographic researcher often has "blurred boundaries" in their study. This critical ethnography placed me in a position where I had to grapple with my identity as an indigenous *Kankanaey*, as a doctoral student coming home to employ a Western research paradigm, and being accorded this outsider welcome ritual.

Kanuha (2000) argues that there are always issues in doing insider or outsider research. Among the concerns raised in insider research are objectivity and reflexivity. I was confronted by these issues as an insider. I acknowledge these with the admission that it was always more comfortable to think about being an insider than an outsider. To consider oneself as an outsider in the indigenous *Kankanaey* culture is the last thing I would want to think about. Regarding oneself as an outsider implies some sort of abandoning community relationships, which are the cornerstone to maintaining ties of belonging. But sitting in this bonfire session with community elders and leaders (who were mostly elderly men) made me aware of this sense of being an outsider even though my history and life experiences suggested I was an insider. I had been in similar situations in my previous work, but I realised from doing this research that the insider/outsider perspectives became increasingly complex and intertwined.

Villenas (1996) talks about the coloniser/colonised dilemma where the colonised insider-researcher, often with the advantage of Western education, becomes the coloniser. As a "coloniser," I was totally an outsider in my community. Yet as an insider, I struggled transforming myself into a "researcher" from being just myself in the community. Being an insider/outsider offered so much meaning and understanding of the different perspectives indigenous *Kankanaey* people held about disasters and the issues that surround them.

3.3.1 The "suspicious insider/outsider"

Madison (2005) maintains that insider access is important in critical ethnography. This is particularly true in the indigenous *Kankanaey* context. Aside from the importance of knowing the physical terrains of the community, an understanding of the meanings that are embodied in symbols and language, for instance, requires familiarity with the culture to some degree. But Kanuha (2000) also warns about being considered as a "suspicious insider." He argues that people's experiences make them worry about research. Indeed, experiences where information has been shared without consent and used against *Kankanaey* have made them critical about research overall. Many times, throughout the data collection process, the elders raised the issue about professional *Kankanaey* who have undermined collective welfare for their personal benefit. Hearing this while I did this research was a warning that I could be seen as such. On one hand, my connection with an overseas university raised doubts about my research among some people as a form of access of foreign-owned corporations to their lands. Although I have worked with these people in the past, in their continuing fight for their rights over their lands, they had experiences of insiders who suddenly changed their stand in exchange for something else. On the other hand, the indigenous communities' (research site) issues with mining have influenced outsiders to label people either as pro- or anti-mining. My previous work aligned me to the anti-development group of activists in the Philippines. And consequently, some were a bit sceptical about my research as a means of identifying and critiquing the pro-mining people and pressing issues against them. I was placed in between the suspicions arising from these two labels. It was the interventions of the elders and the community rituals that addressed this issue. Being *Kankanaey* myself was the unifying identity that encouraged people to participate in the research. This could be an advantage of being an insider. But more importantly, the concerns people raised about my research allowed me to better understand, from an outsider's lens, the dynamics of the divisive labelling of either pro- or anti-mining, and how this relates to their perspectives on disasters. The elders articulated this by saying that, despite the issues they are faced with, they remain as one people who confront the same issues in different ways and forms of struggles. The labelling is an imposition that benefits the corporations more than the people

themselves.

This research is my personal journey towards the unfolding of myself in relation to my community and to being a researcher. It was a hard road for a doctoral student but there were always anchors that sustained me in this process. The numerous reflections that went with my research journey were particularly important as I navigated the insider/outsider dilemma. As Marlowe, Appleton, Chinnery and van Stratum (2015) note, reflection leads to reflexivity, and that reflexivity then leads to practice. It was through this guided reflexive process that I was able to see the unfolding of the diverse ways of knowing among the *Kankanaey* people. This was essential in the midst of my assumptions and fascination with a collective perspective on disasters amongst indigenous peoples. Moreover, as I engaged in dialogues with my own people on the ground, my conversations with the "other side" of my world – academic literatures and supervisions – offered insightful reflections in being able to recognise how much of my own perspectives resonate with the people involved in the study and vice versa.

Dwyer and Buckle (2009, p. 60) suggest that the "space-in-between" is the place where the binary of being an insider/outsider can be negotiated. It is easy to situate oneself into this space. However, without reflection and continuous reflexivity it is always easy to step back into the comforts of being an insider. Fine (1994) suggests detaching oneself as a researcher from the people being studied. While this may be helpful, it can be hard to actually do it when the relationship is based on a struggle that one will continue to be a part of beyond the research. My reflections, however, guided me to see this form of "detachment" as an accountability to the authenticity of the people's stories about their lives. It is an accountability that embodies "honouring the trust" [and the experiences] that the participants willingly offered in their stories (Noblit et al. 2004, p.174). This sense of accountability helped me to differentiate my own story from the stories of the people involved in the study.

3.3.2   Defining the "blurred boundaries" of an indigenous insider/outsider research

Dwyer and Buckle (2009) posit that there are always insider and outsider issues in

research. Kanuha (2000, p. 598) supports this by saying that "*connections and sentiments. . . . may have a bearing in doing research as an insider and these may enhance. . . authenticity. . ., yet constrains the detachment required in most indigenous research studies.*" I would argue that the authenticity and objectivity of research does not come alone from being an insider or an outsider. Noblit et al. (2004) assert that valuing the gift of trust that was offered alongside people's stories and affirming this in all forms of representations could be an option to the continuation of discourses on objectivity (and authenticity in research). The same thing holds true for *Kankanaey* people. Research amongst them, whether as an insider or an outsider, is built upon relationship and trust. As Wilson (2008) maintains, research is a ceremony. The forging of relationships and eventually the building of trust amongst *Kankanaey* is not based on being an insider or an outsider, but rather, on the commitment to use research to advance indigenous agendas of liberation from oppressive and unequal relationships.

3.4   The Participants

As mentioned earlier, this study was conducted in three indigenous *Kankanaey* villages. According to the university students who were tracking the number of participants, the community consultations were participated by approximately 1000 individuals in all three villages and the one at the municipal level. Participants to the bonfire sessions cannot be determined as an exact number as it is culturally inappropriate to list the number of people who are coming in to participate. One bonfire session was conducted in each of the three villages with a fourth one at the municipal level, and which was participated by women only. This was in response to the request of some women from the three villages for a space of dialogue where they can talk about their issues as women in relation to disasters. They say that there are issues affecting them that they cannot discuss in front of men for cultural reasons.

Both community consultations and the bonfire sessions had representations from all sectors of the community. The children who were present during these activities were not included in the grouping of participants for discussions. As a usual practice amongst the indigenous *Kankanaey* people during community gatherings or meetings, the children were with

their parents all throughout the discussions. In addition to these community consultations and bonfire sessions, 21 individuals from the three indigenous *Kankanaey* villages were interviewed. Community members were likewise well represented in these interviews. These include three traditional elders, women and men. 16 participants from government and nongovernment agencies were likewise interviewed. These were from the local government unit, national and regional government agencies, and international and local nongovernment organisations. The table below (Table 3.1) presents a summary of the methods used and the number of participants.

Table 3.1: Number of participants and summary of methods used.

Means of data collection	No. of community participants/sessions	No. of organisational participants/sessions	TOTAL
Community consultations	4 sessions (1 each of the three villages and 1 at the municipal level with the NCIP)	-	4 sessions with estimated 1000 participants
Bonfire sessions	4 sessions (three villages and one at the municipal level with women only participants)	-	4 sessions (total number of participants cannot be determined)
Fostering solidarity/ observation	Farm activities; travels; doing laundry along riverbanks;community functions	5 workshops and meetings	10 months of engaged fieldwork
Interviews	21 interviews	16 interviews (5 non-indigenous; 11 indigenous peoples)	37 interviews in total

3.5   Recruitment and Ethics

The recruitment of participants from the villages followed after the rituals of access had been performed. These rituals offered provided the approval of the elders and the local officials for the conduct of the research. For the community consultations, invitations were made through the local officials, particularly the village chiefs, who made the announcements about the activity in their respective villages. The bonfires, as traditional spaces for solidarity and dialogue, do not require any invitations. It is the bonfire itself that invites people to gather and participate in a certain discussion. Once the evening bonfire is lit, this signals to the villagers

that there is something ongoing in the village and that their presence and participation is invited. That was how participants to the bonfire sessions for my research gathered to voluntarily contribute their knowledge and wisdom.

For the interviews with community participants, announcements were made during the community consultations and the bonfire sessions that anyone interested in participating in a more focused interview were invited to see me directly. Those who participated approached me directly and expressed their interest to be interviewed. I made follow-up visits to these participants in their homes to arrange the interviews. The follow-up meetings were also done in some places such as the village stores, clinics, in the bus, and many more where I did not have to take so much of these villagers' time to arrange schedules with them. In some instances, the interviews happened right away in these spaces. Issues of confidentiality regarding this are discussed in the following narratives. For the elders, I approached them directly and sought their approval to participate all throughout the research process. The indigenous *Kankanaey* culture provides that elders have to be approached directly for anything that needs their wisdom or participation. Ethical considerations about coercion are discussed later in this section.

For participants from the government and nongovernment agencies, the recruitment of participants was done through the heads of these organisations. The participant information sheet and consent forms were provided and explained to these heads of agencies. The heads of agencies signed these forms to convey their understanding and as an expression of their consent to conduct the research with members of their staff. Then, they made announcements that whoever was interested to be interviewed would approach me directly. Because of the nature of government agencies in the Philippines where one office has several bureaus and units with several focuses, there were instances when the persons who approached me have jobs that are not related to DRR. In order to make sure that my interviews are focused on DRR, I had to directly approach some of the organisation participants and asked if they could participate. This manner of approaching participants from persons with authorities is more culturally appropriate in the Philippine context as this also connotes an expression of respect to them.

3.5.1 Informed consent

For participants who were able to write, they were provided a copy of the consent forms, where they provided their signatures as expressions of their consent to participate in the study. Other community participants provided oral consent, which meant that there were no instances that they have agreed to participate to the research through being coerced. To address this, an indigenous ritual was performed between me and the participants as a means of honouring the statements made in the consent form, which I verbally translated for them. Rituals are more binding for the indigenous *Kankanaey* than written documents.

3.5.2 Coercion

Participants may feel compelled to participate in the research in recognition of the authority of the village chiefs who will make the invitation for participants to the study (community consultations). To address this, I made it clear to them that participation was completely voluntary, and they made this explicit in their announcements. In terms of directly approaching participants such as the elders and some from the government agencies, these people are authorities who have more power than me and they could always turn me down or dictate how they wanted the interview process to take place, including the information that they want to share.

3.5.3 Confidentiality

Confidentiality in the context of the indigenous *Kankanaey* community consultations and bonfire sessions are guaranteed in the rituals that were performed as a part of the process. The rituals obliged everyone in these gatherings to keep confidential matters, such as the names of people and statements that they make within the community consultations and bonfire sessions, alone. The identities of the participants for the interviews were kept confidential since they contacted me directly upon being told that anyone who wanted to be interviewed could visit me in the place where I stayed throughout my fieldwork. The agreement for confidentiality was also a part of the required rituals for the research.

3.5.4 Conflict of interest

Known to the community as a social worker who previously worked with them in several projects and activities, such as the anti-mining advocacy campaigns, I had to make it clear that participation in the research did not have anything to do with my previous work.

3.6 Developing methods, building and sustaining trust

"Research is about satisfying a need to know, and a need to extend the boundaries of existing knowledge through a process of systematic inquiry. Rationality on the Western tradition enabled knowledge to be produced and articulated in a scientific and 'superior' way" (Smith, 2012, p. 172). (Original emphasis).

As I write my methods, my thoughts bring me back to the day I went home to Kibungan from the city to relocate for my fieldwork. I was on a bus and was seated next to an elderly man who challenged me with *Kankanaey* riddles and proverbs on the four-hour trip to the village. As an insider, I am aware of the significance of riddles and proverbs as a source of knowledge amongst the indigenous *Kankanaey* and I anticipated having many of these experiences during my fieldwork. But I did not expect that the bus ride would soon become a literal and symbolic space for the construction of knowledge in my research. While Western research defines what constitutes rational and scientific inquiry, indigenous means of constructing, sharing and sustaining knowledge such as their proverbs and riddles and the venues in which these are communicated as powerful spaces for disasters research with indigenous peoples (Smith, 2012). Just like how the elderly man picked up his proverbs and riddles from the scenery on that bus journey, the indigenous *Kankanaey* people's perspectives and stories about disasters were constructed from the landscapes of their ordinary daily activities such as farming, communal rituals, and travels.

In relation to critical ethnography, Madison (2005, p. 26) maintains that the researcher and their participants are regarded as "conversational partners," where they are engaged in

a "performative dialogue." This performative dialogue brought out how important it was to "re-create" with my participants my predefined sets of methods and adapt these to the spaces where indigenous experiences of everyday life take place. Smith (2012) argues that indigenous peoples do not call research "research," but would always have a cultural way of naming it, thus raising questions about the direct application of Western research methods. In the following sections, I will attempt to describe the indigenous *Kankanaey* ways and spaces of dialogue (methods) in the production and construction of knowledge about disasters. I use *Kankanaey* terms that have emerged from my fieldwork and weave the discussions with some of Smith's "Twenty-Five Indigenous Projects". These Twenty-Five Indigenous Projects are, as Smith (2012, p. 143) argues, ways in which indigenous peoples can "take back control of our destinies." She maintains that these have been developed by indigenous researchers and therefore do not claim to be purely indigenous. She adds that "these projects intersect with each other in various ways" (Smith, 2012, p.143).

I take this risk as an indigenous researcher myself to name the *Kankanaey* spaces of exchange and solidarity as research methods. Out of the 25 indigenous projects, I can name only seven of them (these are written in bold letters in the following narratives). The *Kankanaey* people will continue to be the subject of research. As such, I encourage indigenous *Kankanaey* researchers to engage in a continuing conversation with their people and communities and participate in further developing and "naming" these indigenous *Kankanaey* research methods. Amongst the 25 indigenous projects that emerged in my study include the following:

- Naming
- Indigenist Process
- Story-telling
- Connecting
- Celebrating survival
- Intervening
- Testimonies

3.6.1 *"Pan-aaspuan di umili:"* community consultations in emerging a "collective" indigenous voice in disaster research

As soon as the rituals that allowed access into the villages were performed and the elders' permission to conduct the research had been sought, community consultations were held separately in the three villages. They were held with the intention of informing the public about my research and to invite those who may be interested in participating. This was in keeping with my university ethics approval in terms of participant recruitment. Besides personally talking to the elected village officials about these community consultations, formal letters were sent out by the Punong Barangays (village chiefs). The Punong Barangays were responsible for setting the consultation schedules and for informing the villagers about them.

The first community consultation was held in the village of Palina, where a large number of people (380 participants) gathered. The people who gathered already expected to discuss disasters and share insights for the research. In this case, the villagers consider a community consultation as pan-aaspuan di umili, which can be literally translated as a community get-together for something important to talk about. Here, they expected to mingle, discuss, argue and help derive the meaning of disasters as had been communicated previously to them. Smith (2012, pp. 147-148) maintains that one of the ways indigenous peoples are engaged in research is through an "indigenist process." She describes this as a means of "countering the negative connotations" of "indigenism" and "privileges indigenous voices" in research. Thus, the community consultation turned out to be a community gathering for people to offer insights and direction on how to get along with the process of generating perspectives and knowledge about disasters.

I had initially prepared for what I conceptualised to be "research consultations." I thought I would simply be presenting the background and objectives of my research, recruiting participants and coming up with initial plans with people, but I was met with the challenges of how to go about the process. I asked how people might want to go about it themselves, and to my amazement, they already had a process in place. Like the usual indigenous *Kankanaey* dialogues, the process started with a storytelling session, which offered a powerful framework

for the people who were gathered to participate in further and deeper dialogues about my research in connection to the life of individuals and their villages in general. I realised how, even as an insider, one has to continue learning about her own people and community. The activity started with a short programme that one of the community leaders hosted. I was then invited to talk about my research.

The presentation generated questions from the people to which I responded. When everything was clarified, community leaders suggested forming groups to talk more about the topic. Voluntary facilitators automatically emerged with women taking on the lead role, encouraging some students and young professionals to join them. In a short time, groups were formed as follows: 1) Community leaders and barangay officials; 2) Youth/students and young professionals; and 3) other sectoral groups such as the women and farmers. The children stayed with the groups where their parents were. Then, I was asked to initiate the process of discussion. To do this, I asked the following questions:

1. How do we define/understand disasters according to our experiences?
2. How have we responded to these?
3. What needs to be done further?

I moved around the different groups as they discussed their responses to my questions. This was to pick up on their process and offer help if and when it was needed. With the help of students, the outputs of the group discussions were written on large pieces of paper. Some groups opted to share the results of the discussion orally. I have taken these interactions and conversations down in my notes after the fieldwork. The sharing was rich with information and the process provided valuable insights in going about the next community consultations.

Picking up from the lessons of this first community consultation in the village of Palina, I was ready to journey to the other two villages. I went to the next village with a process in mind that I thought would suit cultural procedures. But again, it turned out that each of the villages had their own ways of doing these consultations. The village of Lubo also generated a large number of participants (estimated to be over 300 attendees). No attendance sheets were signed,

however, as people did not want to sign any documents considering previous experiences where their signatures had been used as consent for a development project they did not approve of. People already had their roles for the activity, and they facilitated the process according to the "programme of activities" they had prepared earlier. I learned from one of the women leaders that there were community meetings to discuss my research and to plan on the process prior to the activity.

Before giving me the opportunity to talk, community leaders spoke to situate my research topic and the intentions of doing it given the ongoing community issues and struggles. One of the village elders was present at that time and offered significant insights that were helpful in the group discussions later. Women leaders facilitated the groupings that were similar with those in Palina but with the addition of a group of government beneficiaries from a cash transfer programme who wanted to form a separate group. I did not provide any guiding questions for these group discussions since I noticed that they had already picked up the village leader's explanation and they knew what to talk about. They discussed their struggles for survival in general and how they were able to sustain themselves, their families and their community. Then, they connected how these challenges with their experiences with natural hazards. After these discussions within in their groups, the participants gathered together and related these stories to their concepts about hazards and disasters. A community leader facilitated the process with the elder quietly observing most of the time. He never intervened in the discussions. He waited until his wisdom was sought to clarify or to deepen the dialogues. This process offered meaningful insights which include their conceptualisations about disasters and the ranking of hazards as well as the people's capacities and responses over these.

In the village of Madaymen, the "community consultation" coincided with the first day of a workshop on participatory mapping for DRR. Elected local leaders as well as representatives from NGOs were around. As such, the activities followed the typical barangay assembly programme, with politicians speaking one after another. The first day of the campaign period for the national elections coincided with this activity. The barangay local government prepared the opening programme and were facilitating this at the same time. Then I was asked to present

the research and also facilitated some group discussions with the help of young professionals from the village. The five-day workshop deepened the conversations that were initiated in this community gathering.

These community consultations provided an important learning to me as an indigenous *Kankanaey* researcher – three *Kankanaey* villages with their own distinct ways of producing knowledge. To the indigenous *Kankanaey* people, these varied meanings and processes of producing knowledge are the essence of a "collective voice" in research. This collective voice does not necessarily mean a homogenous perspective. It is about being provided the opportunity to tell their own stories in a space of dialogue that is meaningful to their everyday life, and ending that conversation with a sense of fulfilment that their voices and stories behind their perspectives were captured and respected in the research process. As Smith (2012, p. 145) aptly puts it, "each individual stories are powerful." This therefore calls for the researcher to become a part of transforming this collective voice into a "collective story in which every indigenous person has a place" (Smith, 2012, p. 145).

Community dynamics of power were noted in the processes of the three different villages, but it was important to see how these were negotiated along the way (Madison, 2005). For instance, some people wanted to control the process, while others were quiet in the presence of authorities. As a participant in this community dialogue, I was a player in these power dynamics, but also a part of the negotiation process. In the end, I began to see these consultations as a space where a group of people came together simply to add their voices and experiences to a collective production of knowledge about disasters. In relation to this, I grew up being taught that elders are accorded so much respect and that their voices are considered almost absolute in community processes. Yet, it was insightful to witness how they never intervened or imposed their ideas in the community gatherings. Instead, people actively sought out their wisdom. This taught me to continuously seek elders' advice throughout my fieldwork and also constantly consult with community leaders. Doing this resulted in being able to sit in the *at-ato*, or bonfire sessions, as the next space of dialogue for my research.

3.6.2 *At-Ato*: deepening and connecting collective meanings and understandings through bonfire sessions

At-ato, or bonfire sessions, are considered sacred institutions and power is negotiated along the process of sharing and learning. It is one of the *Kankanaey* spaces where knowledge is constructed and passed down orally to the next generation. Unlike other indigenous institutions where participation is limited mostly to the elders, the bonfire sessions facilitate the coming together of all members of the community to tell their stories, listen to others' stories and learn from one another. Participation to the bonfire sessions is open and voluntary. While the process of sharing is spontaneous, it is important to note how the participants stay on track with the main purpose of the dialogue. Everyone gets the chance to share their thoughts, including children and outsiders or visitors, but no one is forced to speak. Most of the time, an elder sits at the bonfire to offer wisdom on the topics being discussed. This collective process of sharing, constructing/re-creating and producing new knowledge(s) draws the researcher into what Madison (2005, p. 176) describes in performance ethnography as travelling "more deeply inside the mind, heart, and world of the subject." The modes of communicating can be anything that is comfortable to the "performer", and, in most cases, these are either through story-telling, folktales and songs, riddles, proverbs, chants (by the elders) or other forms of indigenous means of conveying information (Madison, 2005). Likewise, outsiders are asked to convey their thoughts or knowledge in ways that are comfortable to them.

In the *at-ato* for my research, participants engaged in in-depth discussions about their struggles with life in general and their experiences and ways of responding to disasters. These stories were often focused on how they have survived their daily struggles with life. Besides "celebrating survival," these were a means of transferring knowledge and skills to the young who were present in the sessions (Smith, 2012). The bonfire sessions were conducted in the evenings when most of the people had returned home from their work in the fields. Unlike in the man-aaspo (community consultations), these had smaller numbers of participants. I could not estimate the number of participants since the process of the bonfire sessions requires focus and there was no time to count those who participated. Participation to these bonfire sessions was

voluntary and there were no invitations or public announcements made for them. The bonfires that glowed in the evenings were the invitation in themselves.

As the bonfires glowed on those evenings, people started gathering. The bonfires ran for an average of 3-4 hours for the two villages. However, the bonfire session in the village of Palina started at seven in the evening and lasted until three o'clock in the morning. I was told that the elders' chants can extend up to 24 hours if there are several of them gathered at the same time. The chant is a continuing process, where in the case of several elders doing this, they construct a story by chanting alternately. The knowledge and wisdom shared on disasters were often derived from story-telling, riddles, and highlighted by the elders' chants. Bonfire sessions at present do not require the presence of elders. Considering how important it was for them to be part of a conversation where the indigenous knowledge was to be brought outside of the community into Western research, I was lucky to have them participate in these bonfire sessions. The elders' presence and guidance in this space of dialogue contributes to their ways of "protecting" their indigenous communities by making sure that the stories to be told outside of their villages are sufficient and accurate in capturing what disasters mean to them as indigenous *Kankanaey* (Smith, 2012, p.159). Adding to this invaluable presence of the elders is the generosity of the women who prepared coffee and different kinds of indigenous food for everyone to share during these bonfire sessions. These expressions of solidarity and support from the whole community teaches researchers about "connecting" with indigenous peoples in what Smith (2012, p. 150) calls "humanising ways" in research with indigenous communities.

3.6.3   *Makitapi*: fostering solidarity through dialogical performance

Fostering a just and more meaningful human relationship through research is deeply embodied in the indigenous *Kankanaey* concept and practice of solidarity. This sense of solidarity was expressed in transforming participant observation into what Conquergood (1986) and Madison (2005) refer to as a dialogic performance. In the *Kankanaey* language, this translates to *makitapi*. In this process, the researcher is not only an "objective and neutral observer" but acts with the people to address oppressive thoughts and relationships (Crotty,

1998, pp. 7-14). Living the indigenous *Kankanaey* peoples' everyday lives was particularly important for becoming deeply engaged in their ongoing conversations and experiences about disasters. It offered powerful insights to analyse how these related to their current issues and struggles. Smith (2012, p. 148) calls for "intervening" as a process of becoming involved in responding to the "interventions used against indigenous communities" as a responsibility of research. Indeed, in this critical ethnography, the indigenous *Kankanaey* people raised their issues with land –the oppressive land laws and relationships entangled in these – which to them, were the greatest source of vulnerability when facing disasters. This intervening responsibility of research is the same purpose that critical ethnography aims to achieve. Through the indigenous *Kankanaey* concept of *makitapi* (solidarity), deeper meanings were ascertained from the participants during both the community gatherings and bonfire sessions. Working in the fields with women famers allowed me to better understand why the elders say that the challenges of everyday life are more than the threat of natural hazards. Labour is intensive yet there is no guarantee of a good harvest or a good price in the market. This often puts the survival of families who depend mostly on agriculture at risk. Additionally, I gained a deeper insight into *Kankanaey* daily life and rituals by having access to some traditional artefacts relating to DRR. Through *makitapi*, I was able to see and interact with *Kankanaey* heirlooms, which are largely kept from the public without the necessary rituals. It was also by becoming one among them in their issues and struggles that I was able to engage my participants in an ongoing dialogue, even though I had stepped out from the field to do the analysis and writing of their stories needed to complete this thesis. Lastly, observing how organisations, such as the government and corporations, facilitate disaster-related planning and workshops was an important means of generating information on how institutions working with *Kankanaey* conceptualise and respond to disasters. This is further discussed in Chapter Six of the thesis.

3.6.4 *En ipo-ot*: seeking interviews, engaging with personal testimonies

The community consultations and the bonfire sessions were opportunities for me to recruit community participants and define the parameters of my study. Some chose to do it in their homes. Others preferred to meet at the barangay hall (village halls). I also did my interviews

in village stores, rural health clinics, churches, and other places that that were convenient to the participants. Madison (2005, p. 25) argues that ethnographic interviews are the means by which deeper meanings are generated from "rote information." Furthermore, she maintains that the "interview is a window to individual subjectivity and collective belonging" (2005, p.26). These ethnographic interviews were envisioned as opportunities for the participants to talk about disasters subjectively. Sometimes, these brought up issues that were too personal and sensitive but, in a way, reflected larger community truths that were important in analysing how they influenced overall conceptualisations of disasters and hazards. For instance, when someone talked about her experiences about domestic violence, this reflected a pattern as a top-ranking hazard that many community members faced in the villages during the community consultations. Smith (2012, p. 145) maintains that "**testimonies**" can be "constructed as a monologue and as public performance" and as a "method for making sense of histories, voices and representations, and of the political narrative of oppression." The interviews took the form of testimonies where the participants were able to tell their individual stories and express their views in ways that, as one of them said, was "purposeful and liberating." Doing these interviews and listening to the testimonies was at times hard, particularly when they happened in the fields, along the way to a destination, or on the bus. The semi-structured interviews that I had prepared to conduct did not work in these venues. I had to rely on the objectives of the interviews to keep the conversations on track. There were also instances when taking notes during interviews did not work, such as while working with the participants in their fields or walking them home from church or from the markets. I had to rely on my "mental recording" of the interviews and started writing notes from my recall the moment I reached home. Interviewing for disaster research amongst the indigenous *Kankanaey* requires the researcher to seek ways of doing these in a friendly and culturally appropriate ways that do not disrupt daily survival activities. On the part of organisation participants, semi-structured interviews were employed, and these were conducted in their respective offices.

3.7   Analysis of data

Data analysis is the process of critically engaging with data and the participants involved

to make sure that the research has been done correctly with precision and rigour (Rossman and Rallis, 2003). Using Madison's (2005) suggested process in analysing critical ethnographic data, I have summarised below the steps that I took in my analysis (interview transcripts, chants, field notes, photos of artefacts). Bar the transcripts of interviews with organisation participants, all my data, including the field notes and chants, were originally written in the *Kankanaey* language. I did the English translations for all the data with the exemption of the chants, which I chose to leave in the *Kankanaey* language. This is because translating these highly idiomatic chants into another language may change the meaning conveyed by the elders. Also, the chants are considered sacred and altering the meanings conveyed by these that may happen with translations is considered offensive in the indigenous *Kankanaey* context. I coded these chants directly from the *Kankanaey* version and made interpretations with my codes in English. I sought clarifications and approval from the elders of the final version of the English interpretations. Doing this is putting into practice the emancipatory purpose of critical ethnography, of expressing respect to the elders, and a way of honouring the indigenous processes of producing knowledge. For the rest of my data, I coded from the English translation but constantly referred to the *Kankanaey* version to double-check the accuracy of the information translated.

Rossman and Rallis (2003) maintain that data analysis is an ongoing and cyclical process. Schutt (2011) adds that it is an art. These statements are both true to my analysis, which continued for over a year. Still, I find myself continually returning to my data and re-interrogating them as I wrote my chapters. This emergent and ongoing process has become a part of the art of weaving together several threads of information gathered from the field. The unfolding of themes from the process of coding and clustering is like witnessing the tiny strands of threads that are being sorted out and woven into a beautiful tapestry from the indigenous *Kankanaey* woman's backstrap weaving skills. Madison (2005) proposes eight steps in the analysis for critical ethnography. I have revised these eight steps into seven steps to suit my indigenous methods. These are presented here in the following analytical hierarchy:

3.7.1   Initial coding

I initially considered using Nvivo for coding. However, as soon as I started working with this software, I felt that I needed something more – a "human connection" with my data. Madison (2005) maintains that software is definitely useful in research for processes such as transcribing, organising data and categorising themes and sub-themes. However, she suggests that computers and software do not have the same capacity as humans to see and feel what is beyond the data. Therefore, she proposes that if a researcher chooses to use computers and software in the coding process, one must not depend solely on them as the "major source." Madison (2005, p. 39) goes on to argue that "there will always be nuances, translations, and idiosyncratic categories that the computer is incapable of processing." As such, I decided to code manually considering that this would be a more appropriate approach for my research. Indeed, building and sustaining relationships and being committed to the indigenous means of collectively producing and sustaining knowledge is an accountability of research (Smith, 2012). Working manually with my data made me feel more connected to my participants. More so, it made me feel like they were a part of the process, of "picking and gathering" codes from a huge data set, which would have been difficult to navigate alone without the "presence" of my community.

Research is a performance, and so is the coding process (see Conquergood, 1986; Madison, 2005). Coding manually from the interview transcripts, field notes and the elders' chants transported me back to the bonfire sessions in the villages, where I felt like I was sitting once again with the elders and the villagers, and engaged in what constructionism describes as 'the collective process of creating meanings' (see Blumer, 2003; Holstein & Gubrium, 2013; Schwandt, 1994). This sense of being in communion with the people as I did the coding was a constant reminder of the commitment to the accountabilities of critical ethnography that I had acknowledged in the acceptance rituals with the elders and with the *Kankanaey* people in general before starting my fieldwork (see Madison, 2005; Thomas, 1993). The coding process nurtured a sense of connection. As an indigenous *Kankanaey* researcher, this symbolic and sacred process of "engaging" my people in the analysis of information was my way of honouring

the pact of acceptance rituals to constantly look back to my indigenous village whenever I felt there was a need to be grounded in the *Kankanaey* teaching and practice of collective life.

Using coloured markers, I highlighted phrases and sentences in my data set that were similar. For example, all phrases and sentences that refer to natural hazards were highlighted with a red marker, and those that refer to the concepts of disaster were emphasised using a green marker (see Figure 3.2).While analysing and highlighting similar concepts and eventually coming up with clusters, I compared and contrasted the topics within the cluster (Madison, 2005). I made memos on the side that were later helpful in elevating these topics and clusters into categories and themes.
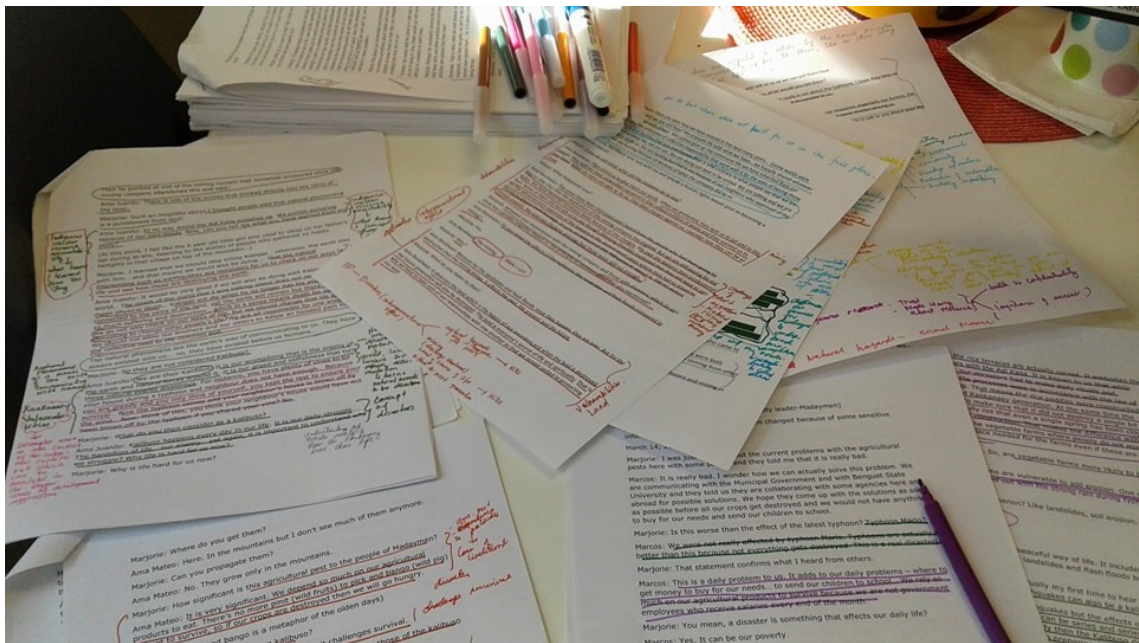
Figure 3.2: Coding using coloured markers.

3.7.2 Writing memos

From the initial coding, I wrote memos that were helpful in giving directions to the focused coding (Madison, 2005). Additionally, Rossman and Rallis (2003, p. 291, original emphasis) maintain that "**There is no substitute** for the thinking and reflecting that go into these memos." They (2003, p. 272) further propose that researchers need to be creative with "writing" memos: these can be in the form of poetry, drawings, and "metaphors" that can capture what one is learning, "what it is like", and "what images these evoke?" Accordingly, I have used

proverbs, indigenous images as well as other texts in my side-memos. Marlowe (2010b, p. 51) adds that writing memos help "with identifying any gaps in the emerging analyses," and thus offers information on what still needs to be explored with the participants. In relation to this, writing memos was also helpful in the theoretical sampling by providing the focus of the data-gathering process with new participants.

3.7.3   Developing focused coding

During the initial process of coding, I noticed that I had coded almost everything in my data. My analytical memos offered a more solid and specific direction for a more focused coding. As more codes emerged in the focused coding, I also started identifying major codes that eliminated and merged some of the initial codes. However, this brings up the issue of who controls the process of analysis and who chooses what information to focus on (Foley, 2002; Madison, 2005, see). As Marlowe (2010a, pp. 53-54) aptly puts it the researcher is "ultimately the analytical filter which decides what was retrieved and privileged from what was demoted as being less relevant." I used another set of coloured pens to highlight these new codes and used asterisks to identify these as the new codes that emerged from the more focused round of coding.

3.7.4   Creating clusters and triangulation

Madison (2005) refers to clusters as the sets of data that form a category or theme. Following this concept in the analysis for critical ethnography, I grouped together all similar topics by going back to soft copies of the transcripts, field notes and chants and copied and transferred any similar phrases and sentences into a Microsoft Word document with assigned participant numbers. This uses Carspecken's (1996) suggestions of using the computer to aid in coding whilst at the same time being connected with the data (see Figure 3.3). I continued to note topics in the cluster by writing side-notes in the pages for each of the cluster of topics. At this stage, I noticed some topics that had to be moved to another category. I marked these using black ink and later moved them to another category. After carefully examining and triangulating

the topics under each cluster, I compared and contrasted each of the categories and created linkages and themes. Alongside the three major themes emerging from this process are the sub-themes that have then guided the formulation of my headings in presenting my findings chapters.

Madison (2005, p. 9) further argues that critical ethnography is the "meeting of multiple sides in an encounter with and among the others. One in which there is negotiation and dialogue toward substantial and viable meanings that make a difference in the other's world." This process of negotiation and dialogue was reflective in my data analysis as I triangulated the different voices and perspectives on disasters. The triangulation was instrumental in formulating substantial meanings about indigenous peoples' perspectives on disasters as reflected in the headings of my results chapters.
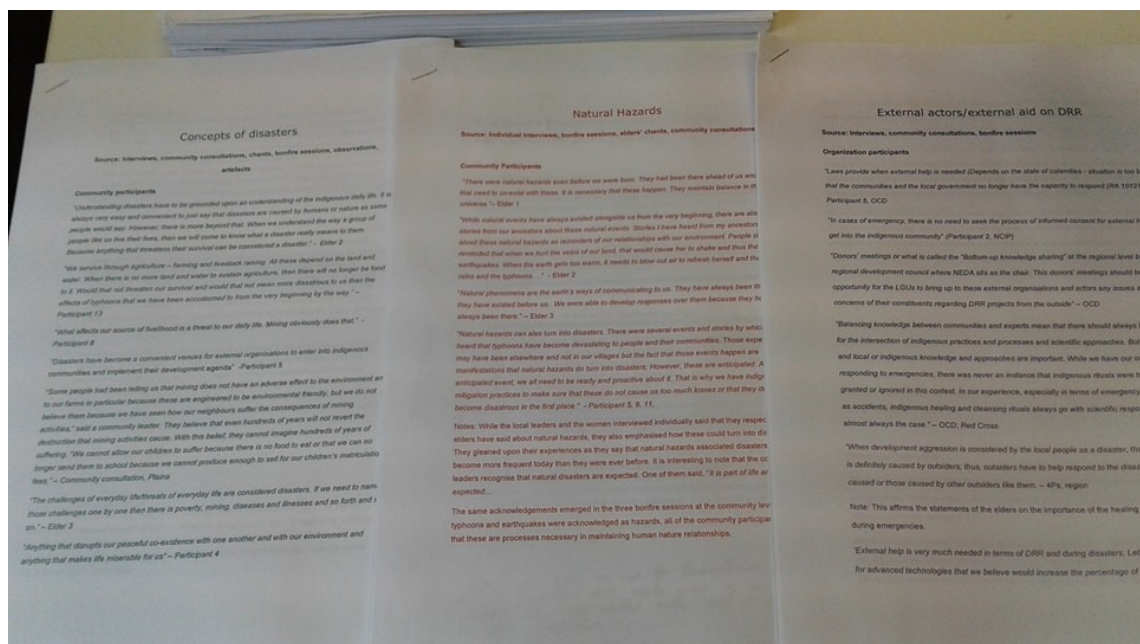
Figure 3.3: Sample of colour-coded cluster of topics.

3.7.5 Generating categories/themes

Madison (2005) maintains that categories or themes emerge from data clusters (clusters of similar topics). Discovering these categories and themes can take place either deductively or inductively. Rossman and Rallis (2003, p. 282) state that the inductive method of analysis is

emerging "indigenous categories" from the participants. My choice to engage with the inductive process of analysis was thus in keeping with the constructionist approach of creating meanings from a process or experience (see Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Holstein & Gubrium, 2013). This was also in accordance with the ways by which the indigenous *Kankanaey* people merge lessons and insights from stories in communal spaces of learning such as at the bonfire sessions. The insights and understandings have to come from the stories as told and understood by the storyteller. Coming up with the categories and themes from what the participants said follows this indigenous *Kankanaey* process of generating knowledge and insights from stories.

After teasing out the themes, I used a concept map to "brainstorm the ideas that recur" (Rosmman & Rallis, 2003, p.284). As mentioned earlier, the themes that emerged from recurring phrases and patterns were those like indigenous everyday life and the hazards of everyday life, disasters and natural hazards, and institutional responses to disasters, and external influences. These themes have therefore become the focus of my three results chapters and drawing concept maps was helpful in further structuring the main headings of the chapters. An example of this concept map is presented below (Figure 3.4):

Figure 3.4: Concept map for "understanding indigenous everyday life" that represents data from interviews, story-telling, community consultations, and elders' chants.

3.7.6   Consultation with participants

To make sure that participants were constantly engaged in every step of the research, I had to constantly consult them throughout the process of analysis (Madison, 2005). Alongside indigenous research methodologies (for example, see Smith, 2012), critical ethnography emphasises that research must resonate with the voice of the people about existing inequalities (Foley, 2002; Madison, 2005). Engaging participants in the analysis allows them to participate in a crucial part of the research, which is a step towards interpreting and theorising their voices. I sent emails to my participants and called them on the phone to discuss and clarify emerging themes with them. In the middle of my analysis, I flew back to the Philippines to present the initial results of the analysis to the council of leaders and community leaders. Along with the presentation of initial findings, I discussed with them the process of data analysis to confer about other topics and themes that may have emerged subsequently.

3.7.7   Theoretical sampling

New participants, specifically from organisations, were recruited and interviewed as their perspectives were deemed important for further understanding and analysing the data. More information was also gathered from community participants to clarify or add to the data already provided. I did this both through phone conversations and meeting them personally in the relevant field sites. Given (2008) maintains that theoretical sampling does not only mean recruiting new participants or gathering more information. It is a methodological process that aids the researcher in generating theories from the sets of data through a more in-depth understanding of the categories.

3.8   Conclusion

Critical ethnography was an important and appropriate method for this insider/outsider research amongst the indigenous *Kankanaey* people. Its liberating purpose blends well with critical indigenous research methodologies (see Denzin, Lincoln & Smith, 2008). This is reflected in its commitment in honouring indigenous peoples' stories as well as

the processes and ethics that go with generating and analysing information. This form of commitment is important in building and sustaining relationships with the indigenous *Kankanaey* people, which is fundamental in doing research with them whether as an insider or an outsider. With the guiding principles of critical ethnography and social constructionism as an epistemological perspective, "indigenising" the research process to fit into the context of the indigenous *Kankanaey* peoples' lives became possible, albeit with all the challenges and the acknowledgement that this research endeavour needs to be further developed.

Chapter 4

Conceptualising Disasters: Traditional indigenous perspectives

4.1 Introduction

Understanding indigenous traditional perspectives on disasters is anchored within their everyday lives and the spaces by which they make meaning of these. The narratives in this chapter draw primarily on the narratives of community participants, particularly the traditional elders, community leaders and the women. By community leaders, as defined in Chapter Three, I mean those recognised by certain institutions such as leaders of Indigenous Peoples' Organisations (IPOs) by the NCIP and/or elected village officials. There are instances when the concepts presented by the elders were also mentioned or affirmed by other participants such as organisation participants or when organisation participants' perspectives were important to further explain a point. When this happens, it will be made explicit in the narratives.

This chapter is divided into two major sections. The first section focuses on a discussion about everyday life in the context of the indigenous *Kankanaey* people's values, practices and processes and how this relates to everyday hazards and the conceptualisation of disasters. The second section of the chapter presents the narratives of community participants on development aggression as a form of everyday hazard. It highlights the reasons why this development

aggression is conceptualised as a form of hazard by focusing on the oppressions that manifest from these and why it ranks at the top of the list of all three villages amongst other hazards that were identified. The section also presents indigenous *Kankanaey* responses to this form of hazard. The narratives show how responses were formulated alongside external actors. This highlights the importance of external actors in responding to everyday hazards that are introduced by outside interventions to indigenous communities which may be a challenge to existing indigenous practices and capacities. At the same time, it also highlights the vulnerabilities of indigenous peoples for the potential of further exploitation and oppression from these external responses.

4.2   Part One: Understanding indigenous everyday life

The discourses about disasters amongst indigenous peoples are embedded in their concept of everyday life. Berger and Del Negro (2004) suggest that the concept of everyday life is an important foundation in understanding one's culture. They argue that everyday life, which is commonly understood as ordinary routines, embodies a person's history and identity and offers a framework of understanding culture from an ordinary perspective. The folktales, songs, rituals and chants shared in the bonfire sessions with *Kankanaey* conveyed meanings of their everyday life. Living and observing *Kankanaey* life also provided that these meanings are likewise expressed in their everyday conversations and relationships with others, within and outside of their communities. As de Certeau (1984) maintains, daily routines are more than just activities. They embody the dynamics of individual perspectives and how these are expressed in people's everyday relationships.

Affirming my observations are the elders' statements. They say that looking closely at how indigenous *Kankanaey* live their daily lives provides a critical understanding of their history, their current struggles and responses to these and how these relate to discourses on disasters. De Certeau (1984) maintains that everyday life can reproduce power relations but also, at the same time, can address them. Indeed, the elders say that indigenous *Kankanaey* people's everyday life offers ways of acknowledging the power and dominance that arise from

their daily relationships. At the same time, one can also draw the possibilities of living a humane and sustaining relationship with nature and with one another from this everyday existence. This explains why the discourses of everyday life are more important to the indigenous *Kankanaey* elders than anything else, as these realities relate to every facet of their daily existence.

In a chant by one of the elders, he talks about how their ancestors have lived their daily lives in harmony with one another. Goffman (2002) posits that everyday life is a performance where the performer has to do well in order to encourage others to do the same. The elders narrate the life of their ancestors as a foundation for someone who wants to exercise social justice in their relationships with others. They add that one who wishes to follow the footsteps of their ancestors must be ready to live a life not only for themselves but for others. One of the elders ends his chant by saying that the rewards of living a daily life that is not only for one's self is gained when someone dies, and people chant on their deathbed the good things they did and how the children want to emulate their life. This is captured in the chant below:

Ila-ila-ilalay
I-in-sina-ali dum-ma-ay
Denggen nan todon di ap-apo
Sin inyat da ay natag-tago
Ta siya din unoden tako
I-day-day-eng din anak tako
Inyat tako abe ay natago
Ingganas magiwid din agew tako
Ulay mo maga tako
Ipadas da ay unoden datako
Adi kod siya din layden tako
Ila-il-la-ilalay
I-in-Sali-dum-maay . . .

4.2.1 Indigenous Ethics/Core Values: the foundation of everyday life

Indigenous ethics and core values form an important part of the *Kankanaey* peoples' understanding and response to disasters. Malanes (2002) argues that these core values govern

the indigenous *Kankanaey* people's daily existence. In affirmation of this statement, the elders say that these ethics and values were derived from how their ancestors lived their lives in the past. They add that these are the sustaining forces of the indigenous *Kankanaey* generations and when these are violated, it poses a threat to their survival as a people. In relation to disasters, they emphasise that their resilience is built upon sustaining relationships that primarily build from these values. A lengthy discussion of these core values takes place in bonfire sessions with *Kankanaey* elders. Among which are: bain, which can be literally translated as shame; taan or concern for others in the context of intergenerational justice; inayan or fear of a perceived someone; and paniyew or the desecration of sacred pacts and spaces.

From my observations, these core values are being preserved and transmitted by traditional leaders. However, at the same time, new leaders are promoting "indigenous" values tainted with outsider influence. This was the centre of a discussion about these core values that took place during the bonfire sessions and consultation meetings for this research between the traditional elders and the council of elders who have been appointed by the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP). While the traditional elders in the bonfire sessions maintained that these core values continue to be the signposts of their daily lives, participants to this consultation meeting questioned how much of these are still being practised, especially as these intersect with a modern justice system that also governs indigenous communities.

The presence of the NCIP in this consultation was significant as they have made their voice clear regarding these values and the mining issues that *Kankanaey* people currently face. They believe that *Kankanaey* people should strengthen these values and challenge leaders to prove how these work in terms of coming up with solutions to issues of social significance. The official from the NCIP asserted that the agency gives primacy to indigenous values and practices in community conflict resolutions over formal laws and processes. However, one of the local officials argued this statement saying that the values had always been very strong in their village and that these had not been recognised by them in the decision-making process, nor informed consent been sought for certain projects by outsiders. In response, the official from the NCIP added that, while they respect these values and encourage people to teach these to

their children, they also have to make sure that they do not come in conflict with national and local laws. That statement left an unsettled discussion between this local official and the NCIP official as the consultation meeting concluded.

In some individual interviews with community leaders and some *Kankanaey* participants from various organisations, they lamented how the present generation was no longer anchored to these values. From observing the indigenous *Kankanaey* community closely, I found that there are several venues by which these values were being conveyed to the young. However, unlike the bonfire sessions and other indigenous institutions, these are often "modernised" and temporary spaces like community assemblies and after church activities, where the encounters are brief, and the topics are not brought into deep levels of discussion. They are also often in the absence of traditional elders. The other forms of communicating these values are through folktales, songs, and riddles, and these may be used in temporary spaces of dialogue. However, because there are usually main activities and topics to discuss in these venues, the lessons of the folktales or songs are not given emphasis and therefore not completely embodied and taken on.

4.2.2 Demystifying indigenous collective life

Indigenous peoples are often attributed a collective concept in the literature and documents written about them. This includes terms such as collective rights, collective action and collective existence (Clinton, 1990; Holder & Corntassel, 2002; Prill-Brett, 1994; Trejo, 2012). But what does this collectivism mean to indigenous *Kankanaey*? A *Kankanaey* grade school teacher talked about how indigenous collective life is often misunderstood to reinforce the discourses of exoticness and barbarity of indigenous peoples. The teacher asserted that indigenous communal life must be seen beyond the images of people living and sharing everything with others in the village. He argued that the practice of sharing communal meals during rituals that are often used to describe indigenous peoples' collective life is simply an outward manifestation of the principles of responsibility and accountability. These principles, according to him, are the essence of indigenous collectivism. The women supported this statement by adding that, contrary to what other people say, communal life does not only

manifest in moments of need such as during disasters and other losses. Rather, it is an existence that puts concern for others as its primary purpose.

The elders explained collective existence within the context of kinship. They maintained that this form of kinship goes beyond the principle of coexistence and stewardship. Coexistence, to the elders, is living and letting others live without necessarily embodying the element of responsibility or accountability to others. Stewardship, to them, connotes power, wherein one needs to take care of another that is presumably dependent on another. One of the elders summarised their discussions on this by saying that this concept of stewardship gives the wrong impression that humans, being the stewards of creation, are more powerful than creation itself, and thus have to be its "carers," giving them a perceived freedom to control nature. This concept of kinship with creation is reflected in this old *Kankanaey* chant and prayer, wherein the elders call upon the stars and the moon as their "ib-a" or kin and ask them to look over them in their daily struggles and challenges:

> *Sik-a ay ib-a mi ay bu-wan*
> *Ay mang-us usdong sin nan katagu-an . . .*
> *Asam pay adin ilan*
> *Ta adim lingling-an*
> *Ligat mi ta enka ikaan.*

Collective indigenous existence for the elders is therefore not only about humans literally living a communal life but rather living a life that takes nature as a part of that existence and manifesting accountability over that relationship. They express in their chants that concern for others and the accountability that emanates from these relationships is what matters most. To them, this form of relationship is where strangers find kinship and become part of indigenous collective life that is bound by the common principle of accountability to the welfare of humanity and nature. Conversely, they say that an indigenous person who disregards this principle also means disowning the collective life that espouses it.

In relation to these statements are the concepts of rootedness and connectedness that the elders and community leaders raised as significant elements of a collective life for a *Kankanaey*. These were discussed in the bonfire sessions in relation to the roles of the children in sustaining collective life. The elders, as well as the community leaders, talked about the need for every *Kankanaey* to be connected to their roots despite privilege, educational attainment and geographical distance. This sense of rootedness, the elders argued, is the bond that will always connect one to the principles of collective life. They add that being grounded to the communal values and practices of the community is more important than physical presence.

These discourses on communal life brought up the concept of an ili or community. I asked the elders how they would then define a community in the context of the principles of collective existence. Our discussions about a community revolved around perspectives, relationships, accountability and commitment. They explained how people share different perspectives and argue about these, and how the relationships may not always be positive, and people may not always believe and practise responsibility and accountability. Yet, they may still be called a community. At the same time, people can also build relationships across time and geographical boundaries and they can also be called a community. Thus, to the elders, a community neither refers exclusively to a collective existence nor is it about people living in a certain geographical area.

As a participant to the bonfire sessions, I asked how this concept of a community applies to community development. We struggled trying to understand community development since we could not find any translations of the term in the *Kankanaey* language. The closest term we could find was *pansigedan*, which comes close (but not totally) to the concept of "the common good." The elders explained that humanity in general is part of a collective existence because as humans, we are all called to be responsible to one another. They explained that collective existence is not exclusive to indigenous peoples. Instead, it embraces even those who share different perspectives and live different ways of life. Thus, they argued that striving for the common good must be done by everyone and for everyone and not only for specific groups of people by specific people. One of the elders ended the explanation with this statement:

> *"No one has the monopoly of being good or of making others feel good. As humans we are all called to be responsible to one another. Not only indigenous peoples need help or they alone have the capacity for a collective existence. The common good has to resonate in humanity. Humanity is capable for a collective existence."* (Elder 1, 25 January 2016)

I asked the elders how understanding this concept of collectivism may relate to disasters. Their responses pointed out how different people within the different villages might perceive disasters differently, nor would everyone in the same village share their perspectives. One of the elders said that the *Kankanaey* children are now formally educated and they could have other forms of understandings about disasters that have been learnt from school or from other sources. They believe that these new perspectives can enhance existing ones and even help develop better responses to disasters. However, they emphasised that whatever perspectives the younger generation may have, these should always go back to the concept of a collective existence of thinking and acting well not only for themselves but also for others.

4.2.3   Sustaining Practices

The elders believe that their local practices have sustained them as a people despite the challenges they face to their daily life. This includes the challenges brought by natural hazards. According to them, these practices are expressed in their everyday relationships with nature and with one another. From living the daily routines of the people, some of these practices become notable in certain events and circumstances. These are especially manifested in times of need and adversity. In the interviews with participants from the organisations, they acknowledged that sustaining practices were inherent amongst indigenous peoples and specifically evident in times of disasters. One of the participants noted that the survival of indigenous peoples has depended upon these sustaining practices. She was making reference to the inaccessibility to facilities and services for most indigenous communities during typhoon seasons, when access roads are closed and their connection and communication to the outside world is cut. She says, *"They only have themselves and one another to depend on during these times and so far, they continue to survive until today."* Amongst these sustaining practices that are common amongst

Kankanaey villages in Kibungan, there are many that are directly related to disasters and the ways in which they are responded to. These are discussed in the following sections.

4.2.3.1 Ensuring food security

Power (2008) argues that indigenous peoples' perspectives and practices relating to food security are an important consideration in programme and policy planning. Indeed, the stories of *Kankanaey* food security provide a wealth of insights on how their practices can be adapted by government and nongovernment organisations to make their programmes, specifically those in DRR, relevant to indigenous peoples. The elders consider responding to the need for food as a primary obligation for anyone. They associate this belief with the meanings attached to the principle of sharing food. They explained that food is symbolic of friendship and acceptance into a family or community. Furthermore, they argue that, when food is shared with them, it becomes a meaningful gesture of solidarity with their community. The women also revealed in a separate bonfire session with them that friendship and trust begins with the sharing of communal meals. In cases of outsiders being welcomed into the village, they claim that acceptance into the community also begins with this sharing of a communal meal. As a ritual, the elders explained that communal meals are an expression of the responsibility of those who have more in life to share their blessings to others, especially with those who have less. The table below (Table 4.1) presents some *Kankanaey* practices that ensure food security:

4.2.3.2 Economic Justice

The folktales shared by community participants during the bonfire sessions and the chants of the elders all point out that indigenous *Kankanaey* are not supposed to accumulate wealth. They believe that accumulation of wealth is against the values of collective life, especially when wealth is used to oppress and exploit others. This belief aligns with Amin (2003) and Rodney (1975), who maintain that capital accumulation pauperises others. In the context of disasters, the elders spoke about how the continuing disparity between people's economic statuses is a driving factor for increasing vulnerability in the villages. They explained that, as people became richer, they also become more individualistic in their thinking and only acted for themselves

Table 4.1: Indigenous *Kankanaey* Practices that ensure Food Security, from the Community Bonfire sessions.

Practice	Description
Du-o	This was defined in the women's storytelling sessions as the practice of providing basic needs such as food to members of the community who were not capable of sustaining their needs at a given time or circumstance. These circumstances include illness or the loss of a loved one. Also, the women said that,in cases where a woman gives birth and cannot perform her usual functions, other women in the community, usually her neighbours, would do the necessary tasks for her and respond to her basic needs as well. In cases of bereavement, they articulated that this practice responds to the need of the bereaved to focus on their grief/mourning process without having to worry about sustaining their basic needs. Adding to the discussions of the women about this practice, one of the community leaders said that this also applies to community members or communities affected by disasters. Families or communities in general that are affected by disasters are helped with the provision of their basic needs to assist in their recovery.
Awil	From their stories, the women defined *awil* as the practice of gifting someone with animals. In most cases, domestic fowls are used as gifts. One who visits a certain family or community, usually a child but not in all circumstances, is gifted with a pair of animals as *awil*. The women's insights show that gifting animals does not necessarily mean ensuring food security, but is symbolic of community solidarity and an internal capacity to sustain one another. It cultivates the value of sharing what one has to others who may not have enough in life.
Makitin-nan-ay	The women shared that anyone who does not have the capacity to own or plant rice is invited to help someone, usually one who owns several paddies of rice, during the planting season and is compensated with rice grains during harvest season. This makes it possible for everyone, including those who do not have rice fields, to have something to eat during the lean season.

without considering the welfare of others. One of the elders pointed out the conversion of nearby forest land to a massive agricultural field, which he says affected water flows and other natural processes, thus posing hazards to the community as a whole.

The elders shared how certain practices help in leveraging the economic status of everyone in the community, in so far as no one accumulates wealth and no one lags behind economically. They believe that these practices help to address the vulnerabilities and hazards that are created by peoples' growing interest of profit over relationships. Contrary to the notion that these practices impoverish people, the elders clarified that these are required only at a time when

the person has the capacity to do them. Furthermore, the elders said that these practices do not prevent people from striving to have a better life. They are encouraged to share what they have to prevent one's accumulation of surplus. However, the elders also explain that such practices only serve as a guide in living the *Kankanaey* life. Therefore, they say that, whilst it is expected for someone who has more in life to follow these practices, people still have the freedom to choose whether or not to abide by these. Some *Kankanaey* practices of economic justice are presented in the table below (Table 4.2):

Table 4.2: Indigenous *Kankanaey* Practices on Economic Justice, from the community Bonfire Sessions.

Practice	Description
Sida	This practice highlights the highest form of ritual among the *Kankanaey* people. Families who are economically capable to sponsor this ritual offer sacrificial animals to feed the entire community for a number of days (depending on the level of the ritual). This is their way of sharing their wealth so that economic disparities within the community are balanced.
Pabanes	The women describe this practice by saying that families in need of a livelihood are provided for, usually by wealthier members of the community. This includes the gifting of a pair of animals, pigs in most cases. The families take care of these pigs until they bear piglets. Once the piglets are ready to be separated from the mother pig, the original pair is passed on to another family in need. One of the piglets will go back to the original owner of the pair of pigs and the rest remain with the family. These help them start a source of livelihood. According to the elders, this practice strengthens the capacity and resiliency of the community to deal with disasters. Community members whose sources of livelihood have been affected by disasters are helped to recover with this practice.
Pastol	This practice follows the concept of *pabanes*, except that cows and carabaos are the animals involved.

4.2.3.3 *Nem-a* (Swidden Farming): Collective Production

The women spoke about collective production as a form of traditional farming to have sustained not only their everyday survival but also their physical environment. Contrary to the slash-and-burn system that is often pointed out in environmental studies as being a major cause of landslides, Kleinman, Pimentel and Bryant (1995) argue that traditional farming techniques have been found to be more sustainable than farming practices that are based upon non-organic

pesticides and fertilisers. This was true to how the women in the village of Lubo explained *nem-a* . They maintained that this form of farming involves the clearing of only a specific part of the forest, and it takes decades, or even hundreds of years to clear another area for this purpose. They added that the space cleared for the *nem-a* is carefully planned so that even a small portion can be utilised for specific crops. According to them, the innermost area is planted with sweet potatoes, which was a staple food for*Kankanaey* people in the early days. The areas where the clearings have been burned are often planted with pumpkins, legumes, corn and peanuts. The outermost portions are planted with fruit trees that also serve as wind breakers to protect the other plants in the *nem-a*.

One of the elders said that the processes involved in this form of farming allow the land to regenerate before it is cultivated again. From his estimates, it takes up to 15 years or more before one puts the *nem-a* in a "resting" stage and revitalises an old one that has been allowed to rest and regenerate for a number of years. Moreover, the elders add that the *nem-a* is communally shared, unlike commercial farming, where each member of the community has to have their own farms. However, this has been contested by participants from the organisations, saying that many *Kankanaey* people at present have adopted the cultivation of cash crops over traditional food crops and appear to be increasingly engaging in agricultural competition within their communities. To this, the elders responded by acknowledging this but adding that the daily experiences derived from this form of collective production can help in what Berger and Del Negro (2004) assert as a means of transforming the power relations [in the present mode of agricultural production].

This discussion about *nem-a* as a collective mode of production relates to Wisner's (2003b) argument about the injustices in the capitalist form of production that have resulted to increasing vulnerability of people to natural hazards. These also link back to what the elders said earlier about the potential of being tempted into the accumulation of profit to disregard a collective sense of welfare and resilience to disasters. My observations support this with communal resources largely getting converted into private spaces designed to only serve individual or specific groups of peoples' interests. The importance of *nem-a* is nonetheless

supported by *Kankanaey* elders, with one elder saying: "There are no labourers in *nem-a* , only farmers helping one another when one of them needs more work to be done." It appears that there is a mismatch in values and reality in the current era, with the modern agricultural system, which is widely adopted and practised by *Kankanaey* at the moment, being dependent on a supplier–tenant mode of production that depends on huge investments and loans to support production. According to the elders, this often leaves *Kankanaey* farmers cash-strapped and dependent on suppliers once their crops have been damaged by typhoons. The elders expound on these practices by telling stories of survival in the past, where people co-existed with natural hazards and continue to live into the present.

4.2.4   Stories of Survival

As the community leaders concluded their stories on survival, they agreed that there was always something to use from their environment in order to survive. They explained this within the context of nature's capacity to provide for almost everything that humans need. However, they acknowledged that this may not be the case at the moment, for there are no longer wild fruits and edible plants to gather and eat. One of them said that these wild and edible plants have become extinct with the conversion of forest mountains into open pit mines and other forms of Western development. I noticed the same thing as I walked through the trails and mountains that I used to traverse going to school as a child. The wild berries that were once abundant have either disappeared or become so scarce they are almost impossible to find. Indeed, there was a portion of the mountain where wild blackberries were abundant. However, when I went to visit the place during my fieldwork, it was not only the berries that had gone. The entire mountain had gone. It had been converted into a prime agricultural farm. My observations drew me back to what an elder in the village of Palina had said about how the capacity to survive hazards now depends on the limited resources that one has.

The women in Lubo also emphasised that there are no more wild fruits to gather as most of the mountains where they thrived have been converted into either agricultural or residential areas. Upon saying this, they recalled how people in the past, especially during the war, survived

by hunting, gathering and foraging. In their stories, they recounted how nature was able to provide for the people after every heavy rain or typhoon. They listed a number of edible plants and herbs that come out only after strong typhoons. According to them, while people waited for the harsh weather to settle down so they could take food from their farms, they often picked and gathered edible plants in nearby places and cooked these as a meal. One woman told me how children in the past would often feed on wild fruits on their way home from school so much so that they often missed the dinner served in their homes because they were already full. To the women, these wild fruits and plants served as their food and medicine in the past. Two stories in the bonfire sessions with the elders highlight these survival experiences of the *Kankanaey*.

Figure 4.1: Gubo: Indigenous *Kankanaey* traditional basket for catching fish – Photo by Kolbel Acquipat, April 2018, Used with permission.

4.2.4.1 Hunting and gathering

The hunting and gathering or picking of wild fruits was done in consonance with the changes observed in the environment, one of the elders said. He added that there were specific species of insects, birds and animals that were to be hunted for each specific season. This follows with the wild fruits and plants, too. According to him, the hunting and gathering or picking of these wild resources were to be done when they were most abundant. Interestingly, he said that many wild plants would become abundant in seasons when agricultural plants were threatened by strong rains and typhoons. The community leaders added that *Kankanaey* follow an agricultural calendar which gives them an idea of when these resources became available for hunting and gathering. Contrary to the pre-historic notion that men were hunters and women were pickers and gatherers, *Kankanaey* women at the bonfire sessions protested by saying that both men and women hunted, picked and gathered.

> *"When women saw the opportunity to hunt, they did so in groups. Men also picked and gathered wild food and plants and brought these home to their families."*
> (Bonfire session, 14 April 2016)

The story of humans hunting, picking and gathering are mentioned in international literature on indigenous peoples, such as those by Cajete (1999) and Lee and Daly (1999), where there is emphasis of the principle of interdependence in the development of human–nature relationships. This symbiotic relationship between humans and nature is also highlighted in indigenous peoples' literature on natural resource management and conservation in the Philippines (Toledo, 2004). The elders' chants mentioned this as well and highlighting how nature has a way of providing for them in moments where their agricultural crops become scarce. Thus, they look at their responsibilities in sustaining the relationships that are crucial to their survival. This includes relationships not only with one another but also their relationships with nature. One of the women told me of her childhood experiences of the capacity of nature to sustain people after a natural hazard when it became too challenging to go to the market and buy their food because of swollen rivers they needed to cross:

"*After a long typhoon, we usually consumed the food that was stored in the house. We do not have refrigerators to keep degradable food because we took these directly from the farms or the mountains. We cannot take more than what we need. Once the typhoon is over, our parents would set out to check on the farms and animals and to gather food for us. My friends and I would race to the rivers to collect mushrooms that have grown from the logs that were washed into the riverbanks and gather those edible ferns, too.*" (Community participant 7, 18 February 2016)

4.2.4.2 Foraging

One of the favourite stories that the elders want to tell are their experiences during and after World War II, particularly how they survived in the wilderness. The elders at the bonfire sessions shared how the forests and the rivers had sustained them during the war. An old woman narrated her story saying that they were scavenging for food in the forest for a long time. According to her, it was impossible to move out from where they were hiding because Japanese soldiers were hunting them. They did not have anything to eat. She told us how there was nothing to hunt and no more wild fruit to pick because they had stayed there for so long that they had exhausted almost every wild fruit and plant. The woman continued to tell us how, while walking along the riverbanks, her mother saw a leather bag floating down the river. She grabbed it and checked it out. She found that the bag was made of cow's skin. She then brushed this with pebbles, washed it with water and sliced it into small pieces. She told us how she had no idea what her mother was doing at the time. When they went back to the cave where they were hiding, her mother asked her to fill the pot they had brought with them with water. Then, she watched as her mother made a fire by rubbing a special kind of stick with the rocks. She then toasted the pieces of leather and once they had become crispy, placed them into the boiling water. After boiling for some time, the leather bag was ready to eat. That lady who cooked a leather bag with her mother to survive the war is now an old woman telling this story. She is proud to say that she would have not made it to the bonfire to tell her story had she not survived by eating the leather bag during the war.

These values, processes and practices make up *Kankanaey* everyday life, the elders say. Heller (1970) posits that every individual has a unique everyday life, and therefore, the

potential for power relations. The elders all explained how these values and practices were expressions of optimism and that it is possible to live a life that takes into account the welfare of others. But in the end, they said, these ways of everyday life are a personal choice for the *Kankanaey*, rather than an obligation. Heller (1970) further argues that social life builds from the individual's everyday life. The elders spoke about the ways their ancestors lived their lives and how they inspired and influenced the construction of a modern-day *Kankanaey* way of life. Stories shared by both community and organisation participants also acknowledged that the life history of the elders contribute to the shaping of social relationships and collective actions that challenge dominant and oppressive practices. The elders conclude that these values, processes and practices that are inherent in their daily existence are, in fact, opportunities to look back on one's own daily life and reflect on how they may contribute or transform what de Certeau (1984) asserts as the reproduction of power and oppressive relationships.

The elders are passionate about these discussions on these indigenous values, processes and practices as these have so much impact upon their current struggles with development aggression focused on mining. All throughout their presence in my research process, they talked about how the non-recognition of these *Kankanaey* values, processes and practices have resulted in power struggles amongst them that benefited the entry and continuing exploitation of their land and life by powerful corporations. Besides the hazards that mining brings to their communities, the elders also emphasised how mining causes disruption of their daily lives, which ultimately impedes their ability to stay resilient to disasters as a community.

4.3 Part Two: Everyday hazards and indigenous daily life

Building upon an understanding of *Kankanaey* daily life and how this relates to disasters, this section focuses on *Kankanaey* peoples' experiences with everyday hazards. It highlights that, while *Kankanaey* people experience different forms of hazards, some of these may concern them more than others. This section focuses on their experiences with development aggression and how they have come to regard this as one of the biggest threats and everyday hazards of their life. Indeed, when asked what the greatest hazard is to their communities, the elders, community

leaders and other participants all claim that development aggression comes at top of the list. In order to better understand this, a reorientation on how disasters are socially constructed by specific groups based on their background and experiences is helpful (Quarantelli, 2005). Analysing the different forms of vulnerabilities as discussed in Chapter Two also provides a framework to further understanding this (see Bankoff, 2001; Wisner, Gaillard & Kelman, 2012; Wisner, 2004).

I fell into a long process of trying to find a local translation of the term "disaster." Before I went back into the community for my fieldwork, I assumed that there would be a collective *Kankanaey* perspective on disasters. I was wrong. The mere process of trying to understand, define and translate disaster into the local language was almost endless. There were several suggestions and insights round this as people tried to find the "correct" translation. This first manifested in the community consultations. After listening to the discussions of the people, I also started to get confused with my own perspectives about disasters. Together, we had lengthy negotiations around the process of understanding the term. The series of community consultations and dialogues with the elders offered significant terms, such as kalibuso and gudagod, which are important to consider in formulating the meaning of disasters. However, the community leaders themselves admit that these are not clear translations or definitions of disasters in the *Kankanaey* language. They say that these terms refer more aptly to the threats or challenges to daily life in general.

The discussions in the community consultations revolved around these threats rather than on disasters as such. It was important to note that the results of the ranking of the different forms of hazards that they identified was almost the same in all three villages during the consultations. Stories about these threats to daily life focused on their struggles with mining and its effects on their everyday existence. As they talked about the mining issue, they also identified other forms of challenges that they believed present as threats to their daily survival. With the help of participants who were able to write, the community people came up with a ranking of these threats, which they had initially identified.

Mining was ranked as the greatest threat to their daily lives. When this was consolidated

and presented by those community members who are able to write, the people were in agreement of the written list and ranking. The table below (Table 4.3) shows how one of the villages ranked these hazards:

Table 4.3: Ranking of threats (Community Consultation 18 March 2016).

Rank	Hazards
1	Development aggression associated with mining
2	Diseases and illnesses
3	Accidents
4	Natural hazards (i.e. typhoons, earthquakes, frosts, hailstorm)
5	Agricultural pests/use of inorganic chemicals
6	Domestic/sexual violence

As mentioned earlier, in Chapter One, my choice of these field sites was primarily based upon how these communities have experienced mining struggles. Therefore, when I saw this result coming out from the community ranking process, I had to reflect on how different the result might have been if this process was done in another village that did not so far have any direct experiences or issues with mining. It was also very significant to note that during these community consultations, villagers who were against and those who supported mining operations gathered in one setting to identify and rank these hazards. I heard heated debates whilst I was going around the different groups to observe the process whilst they were discussing and ranking. As a researcher, I need to acknowledge that, based on my observation of the processes, those who support the mining operations were outnumbered in all three village consultations. This is something that needs to be considered in the formulation of this ranking, although it does not also invalidate the voices of the many people who were present during those community consultations.

In response to the issues on sexual and domestic violence that the women raised, I made use of previous professional networks to link the community women to nongovernment organisations that work for gender and development with indigenous women. I have not mentioned about particular stories to these organisations as these are bounded by principles of confidentiality both in social work practice and in research. Instead, I encouraged them

to strengthen previous work relationships with these women who might be interested in partnership opportunities with them. As a result, these nongovernment organisations expanded their work in the different villages and are currently engaged in gender-sensitivity/gender and development sessions and livelihood projects with them.

It was also interesting that, once I started scanning the audience, I thought there were more women than men. I was therefore expecting that the women's voices and issues will be given more emphasis along the process. However, the result of the ranking that revealed domestic and sexual violence at the bottom of the list was something to reflect upon. In some individual conversations with several groups of women; they raised sexual and/or domestic violence as one of their foremost issues. When this ranking came out, I considered some gender and power issues along the process of dialogues. I noticed in the community consultations that, while there were some women who were really assertive and could stop the men, there were also some who become extremely quiet once the men started talking. However, as the elders would say it, talking about anything related to sex in front of parents, siblings and other close relatives is taboo. That could be one of the reasons why the women were not able to talk more about sexual violence as an issue for the community consultations were participated by almost all members of the family.

The series of bonfire sessions that offered opportunities for storytelling with the elders provided a deeper reflection and understanding of these threats that came up in the community consultations. The *Kankanaey* terms that evolved in the community consultations in an attempt to translate disasters were also brought up to the elders. The three elders, although they who were in separate bonfire sessions, clarified that such terms all refer to the challenges or threats to everyday life in general. While they agreed that mining was currently the greatest threat to their existence, they also said that the list could go on to include more of the challenges that concern them every day.

I attempted to bring into conversation the concept of disasters that I know from my academic background. At this point, I thought of the need to clarify this by talking about the effects of typhoons such as losses and deaths and how the elders may term these. The

elders acknowledged that there were indeed losses and devastations from typhoons and other natural hazards, but they translated these exactly how it was said in English: "effects of natural hazards." The elders were quick in saying that it is not the typhoon per se that causes such losses and deaths. In explaining this, one of them pointed back on their core values and sustaining practices. He focused his stories on the incapacity of humans to look at themselves as an inherent part of nature. He argued that this resulted in irresponsible and exploitative actions that eventually made peoples' lives and livelihood vulnerable to losses and destruction during typhoons. He also talked about the inequalities in human relationships and the lack of compassion for others that resulted in these losses and devastation. He summarised this by saying:

> "*If it is the typhoon that causes losses and devastations, then why are some people spared when we all experience it? Some have better homes and more resources, others don't. It concerns us therefore to look into the irresponsibility of humans and the inequalities around us that make others suffer more the effects of typhoons than the rest of us.*" (Elder 3, 06 March 2016)

From my daily interactions with the people, I have heard them speak about their everyday concerns for survival. They talked about the threats of mining alongside other issues of survival. Their discussions about these other threats revolved around the education of their children, hospitalisation of a sick family member, and other problems that they say worry them every day. In all three villages where I have done this research, I have heard stories on how mining, at any stage, is a challenge to the indigenous *Kankanaey* people's survival. As the elders have put it, mining has affected everyone. This assertion contradicts the notion that only those who oppose mining as a form of development aggression are challenged.

4.3.1 Development aggression

As the elders mentioned earlier, development aggression disrupts their daily life, their livelihood and their relationships, including their everyday rituals which are anchor points for

their collective strength, resilience and hope as a people. Contrary to the common notion about modern agriculture or farming as a source of livelihood for them, the elders pointed out that anything that sustains them is considered a livelihood for them. This includes nature and its processes as well as their interconnectedness with it and the communal sustaining practices that emerge from these relationships. They explained how the processes of development aggression made them more vulnerable to the effects of natural hazards as these have effected a distorted way of life and livelihood. This section explores this further with stories of the indigenous *Kankanaey* elders and community members on their experiences with the different stages of mining embodying different forms of development aggression: application, exploration, operation and abandonment.

Bodley (2014) argues that when development takes place, the first to get affected are indigenous peoples. This was echoed in the bonfire sessions, when some *Kankanaey* elders and villagers shared their experiences about the use of power by mining corporations to inflict physical violence and legal suits in an attempt to halt the growing resistance movement of the *Kankanaey* people. The narratives drew from their experiences with the operation and abandonment of open pit mines, which practically rendered an entire village inhabitable due to the flow-on effects of heavy siltation of their farms, rivers and pasture lands and the drying of sources of water. Talking about these effects of mining, people from all three separate community consultations unanimously and strongly agreed that development aggression should be ranked first as the leading threat to their villages. In fact, even in the small group discussions, mining and development aggression was on top of the list of everyone again. As one of the community leaders said, "the effects of mining on our lives is far more than the effect of a hundred typhoons." An elder in the village of Palina agreed with this and added that they had survived typhoon after typhoon in the past. Mining, on the other hand, puts at risk not only the physical survival of the people but their cultural survival as well. This was captured in a community petition that the indigenous *Kankanaey* people wrote to the national government for the exemption of their ancestral domain from large-scale mining. Part of this petition reads:

> *". . . We, the indigenous Kankanaey people [of this town] strongly oppose mining applications, exploration and operation in our ancestral domain. . . Our physical and spiritual survival people depends on the land . . ."* (Extracted from the original copy of the petition of the indigenous *Kankanaey* people for the exemption of their ancestral domain from mining)

4.3.1.1   Mining as a threat to indigenous survival and spirituality

Expounding further on their argument about development aggression and why they believe that it matters more than other hazards such as typhoons, the elders and community leaders spoke about the effects of mining on their survival and spirituality. In the various community gatherings that I witnessed during my fieldwork, whenever these community leaders and elders were asked to talk about their experiences with development aggression, their argument always centred on the effects of mining to their survival as a people. For instance, in a community fiesta, where the local leaders were asked to update the villagers on the status of the mining struggle, they started by recalling how engineers of the mining company had tried to convince them that modern mining operations use advanced technologies and therefore do not have adverse effects on the environment. However, they argued that they were concerned not only about the effects of mining to the environment but also to their overall survival, which includes the upholding of their spiritual connection to the land. According to them, theirs is a spirituality that is rooted in the interconnectedness of everything within their ancestral domain. This includes the mountains, rivers, and even the spirits of their dead ancestors. They say that when one of these is altered, their entire existence is affected. A community participant who was forcibly displaced by a mining operation shared how his wellbeing was greatly affected when he was disassociated from his relationships with the community. He shared how there is no form of technology that can protect people's wellbeing as a result of being disassociated from their sources of spirituality.

In support of these statements by the elders and community leaders, the women explained how their picking and gathering of wild fruit and plants were also expressions of their spirituality. This has been threatened by mining operations in the area. They spoke of the effects of mining on the indigenous plants and herbs and how this impacted their own wellbeing as

well as the wellbeing of their communities at large. Cajete (1999) argues that plants and herbs sustain indigenous people's food and medicine. The women affirmed this but lamented that most of the indigenous plants and herbs had become scarce in recent times. They attributed this increasing scarcity of indigenous plants to the changing landscape brought about by development activities such as those by mining. An elderly woman narrated how the *Kankanaey* people in the early days depended on herbs to prevent and cure certain kinds of diseases and illnesses. Castro-Palaganas (2001) argues that, while indigenous women recognise the importance of Western medicine, its relative inaccessibility to indigenous communities makes traditional herbs even more relevant to them. Yet, with these traditional plants going extinct, the *Kankanaey* women felt that they were left to rely on non-existent "magic herbs" to survive.

Contrary to what the mining companies advocate, the community leaders see themselves as eventually losing their livelihoods to mining, rather than becoming more "developed." Agriculture has been their source of livelihood for many years. A local politician mentioned at the bonfire that the indigenous *Kankanaey* people were satisfied with agriculture and tourism as their main sources of livelihood. Community leaders in one of the villages also shared how their farms have dried up due to the diversion of water that resulted from the construction of underground tunnels and open pit extraction methods. Holden and Jacobson (2012) maintain that mining increases indigenous peoples' vulnerability to the effects of natural hazards. Stories of the community leaders suggest that mining has caused continuing landslides in their village and also brought diseases and illnesses from their exposure to toxic wastes that have not been cleaned up despite the closing of mining operations.

Community leaders in the village of Madaymen asserted that having the area partitioned off as a prime agricultural area provided families with enough livelihood to sustain their daily needs and send their children to school. The petition to exempt the community from mining was premised on this fact. The petition was based on an Executive Order that provides for the exemption of prime agricultural areas from large scale mining application and operation. The petition has since been picked up by the Representative of the Province of Benguet to Congress and authored House Bill 4387 that pushed for this. Said bill has recently been approved by the

committee on natural resources and campaigns are ongoing for its final passage in Congress.

Given these stories on mining, the elders and the community leaders in all three villages claim that the threats of mining, as a form of development aggression, pose a threat to their survival much worse than the effects of natural hazards. They acknowledge that typhoons can be destructive to agriculture; however, they say that there are always hope of recovering what is lost to typhoons in the next cropping, unlike the irreversible effects of mining on agriculture. The community participants are likewise aware that the government has a programme that helps farmers recover from their agricultural losses due to typhoons. They mentioned about the availability of loan assistance from government and other lending institutions to farmers who have been affected by typhoons as start-up capital for another round of cropping. They acknowledged that these loans may cause some burden on the affected families during repayments, however, they maintain that the threats of natural hazards to agriculture are recognised and support mechanisms are readily available to respond to these. The people also argued that there would always be members of the community who would be less affected by the typhoons than others, which, thanks to the *Kankanaey* values of collective life, means that there would be sources of immediate support within the community when it was needed.

I asked an elder in Palina how the so-called "anti" and "pro" mining division in the community had affected this sense of helping one another when someone was affected by typhoons and other forms of natural hazard. Did the "pro" and "anti" mining people still help one another? This question led to a lengthy discussion that kept us talking for many hours. But the discussion about this was helpful, especially in terms of contextualising their current struggles in developing collective responses to disasters. This discussion is detailed in the following section.

4.3.1.2   The myth of the 'pro' and the 'anti' mining labels: Mining as a struggle for all

As a former NGO worker, I am used to the "anti" and "pro" labels amongst people who struggle with development aggression. However, as I did this research and listened carefully to the elders, I realised how outsiders, including well-meaning NGOs, have actually created

this binary. These binaries are further discussed in Chapter Eight of this thesis. Being one with the NGOs, I hold myself accountable for promoting this dichotomy in my previous advocacy work. For one thing, the indigenous *Kankanaey* elders did not see any divisions among them as a result of their struggles. While they acknowledged that there are differences in perspectives and responses to mining among them, this did not necessarily mean that they were divided. Rather, they saw these differences in perspectives within the context of a collective struggle, where everyone is affected but individual responses are differently expressed.

Numerous scholars, including Crotty (1998) and Holstein and Gubrium (2013) posit that people's perspectives are shaped by their experiences and the contexts by which these occur. The elders expressed how there are many different reasons for every person's perspective and stands on an issue. Heller (1970) talks about the concept of individual everyday life and how this resonates with the construction of a collective life. This argument is relevant within the discourse of the "pro" and "anti" mining community members. To the elders, the reasons for someone's stand in the issue has to be understood within the context of individual struggles for daily survival and relationships. While they mentioned the fact that the quest for power and accumulation of wealth are important conversations in their current struggle, they also underscored the importance of considering individual circumstances in understanding the multifaceted mining issue. They did not label anyone as "pro" or "anti" mining. Instead, they saw an entire community affected by the mining issue. They felt the need for them to continue talking as a people. Along the process of this dialogue, they acknowledged that there would be disagreements and they would be fighting. Yet they believe that it is only in talking that they can chart a common path of understanding between one another in their current struggle with mining. To respond to my question about the effects of the "pro" and "anti"-mining divide on their collective response to disasters, the elders said that these outsider-imposed labels had no effect on them. However, because people have been conditioned by this labelling, they started to avoid those holding opposing perspectives to themselves, which led to the elders' emphasis of the importance of continuing dialogue.

It is important to note how outsiders (myself included in this case) use their own terms

to define and label indigenous peoples and their struggles. Organisation participants in my interviews with them have likewise used the terms "pro" and "anti"-mining in describing the current struggle of the indigenous *Kankanaey*. As reflected in an NGO report, programmes and activities were even formulated out of these labels. Anti-mining campaigns and programs were then on "strengthening" the so-called "anti-mining groups" in the community. This is an important reflection to me, especially as I think about the challenges of naming or translating disasters in the *Kankanaey* language. Whose terms are these and who benefits from these labels are important questions that I started asking myself while my conversations with the elders went on.

As an insider, I had also become a victim of this labelling. This continuum of insider/outsider positionality has been discussed further in Chapter Three of the thesis. One of the participants in the community consultation in the village of Madaymen approached me after the activity and said that she knew and had met me before in a seminar, but she was reluctant to talk to me during that time because she was "pro-mining" and she knew that I was "anti." One of the opportunities that this research has therefore offered me is the willingness and trust of those who have been labelled as "pro-mining" to openly share their personal stories with me. Their participation in the research activities along with other community members opened a new door for dialogue on the mining issue, not only between them and me, but between the community members at large. In their sharing, I heard stories of a sick member of the family, children dropping out from school for lack of finances to support them, and many more. Then, I saw the expressions of hope in the promises of the mining corporations to offer a better life and education for their children. As I listened to these stories, I reflected on what the elders had spoken about in terms of the importance of understanding the issue in the context of individual struggles for daily survival and how this impacts the decisions and actions that one makes. However, at the same time, there were also stories about power and greed that needed to be considered in this context. Thus, as the elders pointed out, it is important to continue asking questions to understand the situation and come up with solutions that are beneficial and empowering to everyone involved.

4.3.1.3 "Footprints in the sand:" Mining as an intergenerational struggle

While walking with one of the elders in the abandoned mine, I noticed his steps imprinted in the sand. I gazed back and saw my own footprints after his. From the mountain, we could see a view of an entire community trying to recover from the devastation brought upon them by an open pit mine. There were little patches of green. Plants were starting to grow. From the stories shared by the people, this sight mirrors exactly how they have struggled with the challenges that mining has brought to their community. As an elder said, they had to pick up their life from what the mining had left for them: broken promises, displacement and uncertainty of life from a land that has totally been devastated.

We continued to walk through the mountain and created more footprints along the trail. I looked back and asked the elder, "How many generations will walk behind us and still see their footprints in this silted land?" He replied that behind our footprints are people, animals and plants that are struggling to live because of what mining has done to their community. He claimed that animals and plants are dying, and that people are also getting sick because of the chemicals that have polluted their land and their sources of water. The same things were said in the community consultation and bonfire session in this village. The people who have spoken in these community gatherings admitted that they were lured by the promises of the mining company for a better life. And so, they were encouraged to support its operation. They spoke about how some of them had been hired for odd jobs such as underground miners and heavy metal lifters. While they admitted that the salaries they received from the mining company had helped their families with their daily needs, they soon realised that these did not compensate for the challenges that emerged from the mining operation at large.

The women in particular, poignantly narrated their experiences with the mines. Aside from the siltation of their rice fields and the contamination of their water systems with chemicals, they claimed that people in the community also started experiencing different forms of diseases and illness such as food poisoning. A local NGO that works with the community in rehabilitating the abandoned mines brought a sample of water to a laboratory for testing of chemicals. The water tested positive for lead and mercury. According to the people who worked

as miners with the company, these were the chemicals used to process the minerals. The mine was abandoned in 1988, but the chemicals are still found in water systems and in the soil today. Although there have been no studies conducted to directly correlate the diseases and illnesses affecting the communities and these chemical exposures, the people suspect there to be a strong connection.

The community laments over the irreversible effects of mining in their community. The community leaders say that the effects are intergenerational. One of the women said that she is sure their ancestors are not happy with what their community has become. Another one said that she was worried for the health and survival of their children. The community does not have enough water to supply their farms and, according to the people, this has greatly affected their agricultural yields. In effect, the village chief said they have lost their farm capital. Many of them have consequently incurred debts from middle-men and farm suppliers, meaning that they can now hardly provide for the education of their children and their family's basic needs.

When asked how their experiences with mining compared to the destruction that natural hazards bring, those in the community consultations responded that natural hazards are nothing next to mining. While they acknowledged that they were concerned with the potential effects of natural hazards to their survival, they asserted that they knew how to rebuild their lives after every typhoon. They mentioned how readily available responses to natural hazards were, as they had been in place for generations; however, the challenges that mining has brought to their community such as the contamination of their water systems with chemicals are new problems, which threaten the survival of future generations.

4.3.1.4 Mining, oppression, power relations, and violence

Foucault (1982, p. 787) maintains that analysing the "means by which power is exercised" is essential in understanding power relations. This inquiry of power relations resonates with how the elders repeatedly spoke about how educated members of the community use their education and privilege to exercise power over others in advancing their own agendas. While the elders maintain that the power one derives from education is not essentially wrong, they likewise

mention that their experiences prove that mining transforms this power into power relations that result in the development of oppressive principles and practices. The elders warned community members about the use of power from one's education to exploit and oppress others as the greatest form of betrayal of one's own people and community. They conveyed this warning indirectly in their chants. Freire (2004) argues that education plays an essential role in human emancipation but also points out its potential to oppress. I have also heard *Kankanaey* parents in my neighbourhood (in the place where I lived for my data collection) often tell their children to use their education for the common good but never as a means of harming or oppressing others.

Kankanaey folktales and parables shared during the bonfire sessions also talk about how greed results in power relations among them. In these folktales and parables, the stories always focused on someone who had become wealthy and powerful by exploiting others. Eventually, this person in the story becomes miserable and realises that there is more meaning in living a shared and collective life than having all the wealth and power but keeping it all by themselves. In some stories, the person would be lucky enough to have the opportunity to redeem this indiscretion in their life. However, often the stories would end with the person dying unhappy. In one of the funerals I attended in the community, the elders chanted about how the dead person had lived his life for others. Hearing this reminded me of what the elders spoke about earlier that no matter how far one had gone in their life, *Kankanaey* will always come home. They add that if that moment of coming home is to find eternal rest, they will be assured that people will be chanting the way they lived their lives at their funerals.

Going back to the folktales shared at the bonfire sessions, the storytellers often ended their stories with lessons emphasising how the obsession for power isolates one from indigenous communal life. Foucault (1982, p. 781) underscores one's "right to be different" in the resistance to power. However, he also emphasises how the struggle addresses "everything which separates the individual from. . . community life." This holds true in the stories of community leaders who tell how when anti-mining organisation had gained traction and became powerful in the community, individuals started resisting this as a violation to their individual right to be different. In a written account of one of the community leaders, a *Kankanaey* engineer expressed

strong resistance to this form of social organisation as a means of inflicting harm to those who are supportive of mining.

The women who sat in a separate bonfire session with me and who strongly opposed the entry of mining into their villages share more of these stories of power and violence in the context of their mining struggle. They explained how the experiences of other communities were their bases in rejecting the project. They talked about the number of crimes that are associated with having mining operations in their community in the past. They also noted that alcoholism and substance abuse among the young became increasingly prevalent during the operation of the mines. More so, they observed a dramatic increase in cases of domestic and sexual violence at the height of mining operations. They lamented how there was nothing they could do at that time as women to address the power of men over them. In effect, they said that there was an increase in the number of violated women and children not only in the mining community but also in neighbouring villages and towns while mining was in operation. Likewise, they spoke of stories of broken families that had split because of this, noting that mining seemed to be a notable force in destroying family life. The women told me that all this seemed to stem from the introduction of different forms of "entertainment" in the mining community and neighbouring villages that comes along with an influx of outsiders into their indigenous community lands.

4.3.2 Indigenous *Kankanaey* responses to development aggression

As the elders told me, the purpose of presenting these indigenous *Kankanaey* responses to development aggression is to highlight that, when issues or challenges come from the outside, the impacts on the communities are significantly worse with limited internal capacities and resources to respond to these, such as countering the slap suits filed against them by a mining company. Often, they say that external support is needed to respond to this. However, in saying this, the elders emphasised that the external help must not be used to further carry out an agenda on indigenous peoples and their communities. The elders also said that their expressions of need for external help when facing mining (but not during other natural hazards) further supports their claim that development aggression does, in fact, pose a greater threat to them as a community

than say, a typhoon. In the case of natural hazards, the elders emphasised how indigenous response practices are already in place, which can easily be mobilised in times of need.

4.3.2.1   On application and exploration activities

While there is acknowledgement amongst the people (i.e., elders, leaders and women) that the issue of mining has become a relentless problem to them, it is important to note that they do not face the issue with apathy. Indeed, they cited a series of examples by which they have responded to mining collectively as a people. The responses mentioned in this section address the challenges that they have experienced during the application and exploration stages of mining. The community leaders said that all these have something to do with working with outsiders, such as the government, NGOs, and the church, as well as with leaders from other mining affected communities. These responses are as follows:

- Collaboration and networking
- Conduct of Information and Education Campaigns (IECs) on Ancestral Domain and the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act
- Dialogues with government agencies and the corporations
- Crafting of petitions for the exemption of the community from large-scale mining
- Lobbying of support from government officials (Local and national)
- Policy formulation (Endorsement of the bill for exemption from local officials and government agencies; Sponsorship of HB 4387; Approval of the bill by the Committee on Natural Resources in congress)
- Fund sourcing for legal suits

As an internal response, the elders also performed community rituals to ease the anxieties of people who had been directly involved in the struggle. The same rituals were performed to seek guidance from a Supreme Being to give direction to their current struggles. The women also shared their ways of responding to the issue. They talked about the moments when they risked their lives to defend their land from the encroachment of the mining company. They recalled how they braved the big trucks right in front of them while they barricaded the roads to prevent the entry of drilling equipment into their community. They also recalled how they have

all been threatened several times by the private armies of the mining company to give up their fight. They mentioned the moments when they were losing hope and how their faith had kept them going.

> *"There were moments when we simply didn't know how to respond to this. We just sat down and cried and asked God to help us with our suffering. That was all we had to do to keep going."* (Bonfire session with the women, March 2016)

Marlowe (2010b) underscores the significance of "double-listening" as an approach to research on loss and grief. This approach uses two lenses in understanding narratives from interviews. In the context of loss and grief, this approach focuses, not only on the grief itself, but also on the life-giving experiences that have emerged from the loss. This was an important model in understanding the narratives of the community participants with regard to their mining struggle. While they talked about the different form of losses and pains that went with their struggle, they also acknowledged the sustaining practices that have emerged with it. According to them, these practices have helped them respond to the challenges of mining as a community. For instance, community leaders narrate about their neighbours who pooled their resources together to help those who had to attend court hearings in the city. They spoke about families who sold their chickens and pigs to provide financial support to those who have had legal charges filed against them by the mining company. Finally, the community leaders mentioned how the organisation of an "action group" of *Kankanaey* professionals has been one of the most significant results of the struggle against mining. They are cognizant of the fact that, while the challenges ahead of them are massive, meaningful feats have emerged from their experiences. Lawyers, social workers, journalists, and artists who trace their roots to the community have worked with everyone in responding to the issues brought by mining. One of the activities that this group of professionals facilitated was a cultural heritage project that documented heritage sites in the community with the participation of everyone. This project helped in addressing the dichotomy of pro- and anti-mining. As one of the organisers said, *"The people enjoyed the photography tutorials and the painting of the heritage sites. I saw a strong and undivided people who continue to work hand in hand for a better future."*

4.3.2.2   Responses to the issues of the abandoned mines

Under the Mining Act of 1995 in the Philippines, companies are obliged to rehabilitate their mining sites before closing operations. However, as the director of an international NGO mentioned, several mining companies in the Philippines have just abandoned their mine sites without cleaning up and rehabilitating the land previously occupied. In the case of this particular *Kankanaey* village, the clean-up and rehabilitation was a community effort. Aside from not rehabilitating the mine site, participants in the community consultation revealed that the company has not done anything to respond to the issues and charges against them either. Leaders of the community shared how they had to mobilise as a community to start rehabilitating the site, otherwise nothing would have been done at all. A staff member of a local NGO said that the people planted the mining site with trees and worked collectively to close the underground tunnels that the company had left open. Records of the local government show that there were several cases of children who have been trapped and died from drowning and suffocation in these tunnels before they were closed down. Broken water systems have also been repaired to restore the people's access to water for both domestic and agricultural purposes. According to the community leaders, these were done with the help of government agencies.

NGOs have been visiting the community since the late 1990s. This has been recorded in the village's local government logbook. The village officials say that these NGOs have been particularly helpful in re-greening efforts and in linking them to support groups for livelihood projects. The Department of Social Welfare and Development, along with other government agencies, has also provided projects and activities aimed at enhancing the entrepreneurial capacity of the women to sustain their livelihoods. These livelihood projects, according to the women, have not only provided them with an additional source of income, but also enhanced their confidence to participate in social in political dialogues about the mining.

Meanwhile, the people note that religious organisations, particularly the Roman Catholic church, has also been supportive of the efforts of villagers in seeking justice for what they claim as abuses and damages caused by mining. People in the community consultations and bonfire sessions talked about this external support as an important dimension in their efforts to recover

from the effects of mining as a collective community.

4.4 Conclusion

Understanding disasters in the context of the indigenous *Kankanaey* people's perspectives needs to be anchored on their concepts of everyday life. To them, this everyday life means their indigenous ethics and values that govern their daily existence and are expressed in their everyday relationships with nature and with one another. This relationship with nature includes those with typhoons and other forms of natural hazards that are woven into their everyday life. Furthermore, this form of relationship manifests in sustaining practices that help build their resilience and their capacity to thrive on their own. The community participants who were involved in this narrative share their stories about the past where nature had provided for them and sustained their survival.

The chapter also acknowledges that indigenous *Kankanaey* people may experience different forms of everyday hazards all at the same time, or something can be perceived to be more challenging than the rest. In reference to this, the community participants highlighted their experiences with development aggression focused on mining as a form of everyday hazard, specifically the oppressions that manifest from these. Narratives of the elders alongside those of other community participants explain why this form of hazard ranks first amongst their list. In their statements, the elders said that development aggression had disrupted their daily life, their livelihood and their relationships, including the everyday rituals that are the anchor for their collective strengths, resilience and hope as a people. Their stories further show that, while there are ongoing needs and means of responding to the daily challenges brought about by mining, these are often in tandem with external support, which further justifies why development aggression came first in the ranking of hazards in all three villages involved in this research.

Chapter 5

Conceptualising Disasters: Contemporary Indigenous Perspectives

5.1 Introduction

The challenges of conceptualising disasters as a contemporary indigenous *Kankanaey* discourse are explored in this chapter. Central to these conversations is how these perspectives have been shaped largely by external factors such as formal education and the media. It presents how these external factors have influenced the current indigenous *Kankanaey* approaches and responses specifically to typhoons, which have largely been associated with what the contemporary *Kankanaey* society refer to as "natural hazards." Participants from the younger generation of *Kankanaey* such as university students and young professionals as well as community leaders construct the narratives in this chapter. By "community leaders," I refer to the officers of government-sanctioned community organisations such as the indigenous peoples' organisation by the NCIP.

The first part of the chapter presents some historical background on how external influences, particularly government-sanctioned education, have influenced current *Kankanaey* perspectives about disasters. It explains how, although these contemporary indigenous perspectives still recognise the traditional indigenous understandings of disasters, external

influences have been obvious in the way they have moulded modern-day *Kankanaey* perspectives. This was particularly seen in how students and young professionals associated disasters with what they called "natural disasters" and "man-made disasters." Drawing on this finding, the second part of the chapter talks about what the community leaders think about traditional indigenous perspectives as opposed to the understandings of disasters of the students' and young professionals. In indigenous *Kankanaey* society, community leaders subscribe to both traditional and governmental systems of leadership. As such, they believe in negotiating and synthesising traditional indigenous and modern perspectives as a necessary process in developing a contemporary *Kankanaey* conceptualisation about disasters. They cited concrete instances in how this negotiation could be done in disaster preparedness and mitigation, focusing on typhoons. Their narratives show that these two forms of perspectives are sometimes in tension with one another but can also be complementary.

5.2   Part One: External influences in conceptualising disasters

American Junk

Leave me alone to my third world devices
I don't need your technology
You just want my natural resources
And then you leave me poor and in misery
Third world blues is what I got
Troubles, yes I got a lot
(American Junk)
Get it out of my bloodstream
(American Junk)
Get it out of my system
(American Junk)
I can only take so much
(American Junk)
Gotta get back to who I am
You call it new music
I call it pollution

You music I now see on my television
(American Top 40)
Why is it now I can only sing
In English language that you people bring
(Da da da da)
Why is it now that they only
Play top 40 music on TV and radio
It's been so long since I had
A glance of what I think I really am.

(Apo Hiking Society, 1978)

This song, by the Apo Hiking Society, a nationalist band in the Philippines, speaks to how much Filipino peoples' ways of life and thinking have been shaped by external influences. In the context of understanding different conceptualisations of disaster, I refer to external influences as the processes that take place within and outside of indigenous communities. This includes schools, religious institutions, the media, entertainment and many more. When asked about where they had derived their perspectives about disasters, university students and young professionals quickly answered that these were a result of their formal education and exposure to the media. With such kind of response, I thought that it would be important to have a quick review of the educational system in the Philippines to better understand the how these understandings have come to be for contemporary indigenous peoples in the Philippines. Talking about the educational system in the Philippines, however, necessarily brings the conversation back to colonial times (Pineda-Tinio, 2002).

5.2.1 Apples, Zebras and Disasters: The American 'legacy' of education amongst indigenous peoples

Scott (1979) argues that the social structure of the upland indigenous peoples in the Philippines remained after the era of Spanish colonisation (although, this may not be true at present). He maintains that this does not mean that they were never colonised by the Spaniards because there were evidences of contacts with them, but it indicates that they have not been "hispanized" (Scott, 1979, pp.137-138). Bagamaspad, Hamada-Pawid, and Balangoy (1985)

argue that, where the Spaniards have failed, the Americans easily succeeded with "democratic" governance, education and Christianity as their colonising tools. Contrary to the harsh and often punitive means of Spanish education in upland indigenous lands, Malanes (2002) states that the Americans "befriended" the indigenous peoples and poised themselves as benevolent teachers and missionaries who could be helpful to them. These were manifested as the first American teachers in the Philippines, called the Thomasites (Bernardo, 2004). Thomasites were, however, actually soldiers with a mission to Americanise the Filipinos (Pineda-Tinio, 2002).

The Cordillera region was among those in the Philippines that were settled by the Americans during their occupation of the country (Bagamaspad, Hamada-Pawid, & Balanggoy, 1985). To connect how the history of these Thomasites might have impacted present-day conceptualisations of disaster amongst *Kankanaey* students and professionals, I will present a short story that one of the elders told about his experiences with American education. He made no reference to the Thomasites, but he talked about the "Malikano ay mimistolo" or the American teachers. He said that the American teachers often employed rewards and punishments as their way of "disciplining" the *Kankanaey* students. He also recalled how his parents would hide him whenever these teachers made home visits to students who missed their classes. He appreciated the fact that these teachers were concerned about them but adds that they needed to have been more patient in understanding the life of the indigenous peoples and the reasons that prevented them from attending their classes.

The elder went on and said that the reasons why most children at that time did not go to school were because they had to work in order to survive. Sometimes, they had to stay home to care of their younger siblings whilst their parents worked in the farms. Other times, they were with their parents to help them with their work. Moreover, he said that children at that time did not have clothes to wear to go to school. "The American teachers were angry at students who were dirty and also those who went to school only with loin cloths wrapped around them," he narrated. According to him, their everyday lives before these teachers arrived revolved around farming, where they need not worry about the kinds of clothes they wore. He also claimed that, as kids, they had to go to the farms every day to gather food for the next day. He argued that

they were taught by their parents to only gather what they needed for the day, which required them to set out every day into their fields. In such cases, he said, it was impossible for him to go to school and sit there for the whole day. He further narrates:

> *"I tried going to school but I ran away before finishing grade 2. I had nothing to eat in school. The teacher also cut my loin cloth because it was dirty and said he will cut it even shorter the next day if I did not take a bath and wore a pair of pants. I did not have anything besides my loin cloth, so I decided to drop from school."*
> (Bonfire session, 25 January 2016)

During those two years that this elder was in school, he said that he learnt many things from his American teacher. He does now speak good English, perhaps better than anyone else in the village. He shared that they were taught English by first learning the alphabet. Each letter in the alphabet was represented by words and pictures that they had to memorise. He added that most of the time, the pictures were not familiar to them – animals, plants or things that they had never seen or heard about in the past. Among these, he said were: "Apple" for the letter "A" and "Zebra" for the letter "Z." These were things they had never heard of or seen in their lives as kids, yet they were still required to memorise these by heart. Memorisation was important to the American teachers, he went on to say. The lessons of today had to be memorised and recited at the beginning of class for the next day. Pineda-Tinio (2002) raises the question of how Filipinos have been conditioned to eventually be Americanised by compelling students to memorise and recite the pledge of allegiance to the American flag as a part of their education. This opens up reflection on the agenda behind the required memorisation of the English alphabet by the indigenous students. The elder did not say anything more about it except that they had to memorise these and that they were whipped on their bottom for every alphabet item associated with the wrong object.

Visiting the Baguio Teachers' Camp museum, which was dedicated to the Thomasites and their work in the Philippines, one particular artefact caught my attention. It was a flipchart used by these American teachers to teach the English alphabet to the indigenous peoples of the Cordilleras. Each of the letters in the alphabet was represented by plants, animals and objects

that did not exist in the community and perhaps even in the country. Examples of these were "Apple" for the letter "A" and "Zebra" for the letter "Z." While looking more carefully at the flip chart, I wondered if that was the same thing that was used to teach the elder who told me the story of "Malikano ay mimistolo."Indeed, many years after the Thomasites had already gone, grade school kids in indigenous villages were still being taught about the same apples as shown in the photo below of an alphabet chart at one of the public elementary schools in Kibungan.

Figure 5.1: A photo of the English alphabets in one of the elementary schools in Kibungan, Benguet which I took during my fieldwork (June 2016).

Going back to the bonfire session where the elder told his story about his experiences with the American teachers, the participants of that bonfire session discussed how the English alphabet could relate to the conceptualisation of the term "disasters." Since they could not come up with an exact definition or translation of the term in their own local language, one of the community leaders raised that this may be the same as the case with the Apples and the Zebras. To him, disasters seemed to be yet another English term that does not exist amongst them

despite being "needed" in their vocabulary like the Apples and Zebras. Another community leader said that there could also be a hidden agenda in the promotion and use of the term "disasters" amongst indigenous peoples. I asked what that hidden agenda could be. He could not articulate what it was, but he said that someone would probably be benefitting from the now widely used term "'disasters" in their indigenous community.

5.2.2 Cultivating disasters as an English concept in indigenous soil

In the community consultations with NCIP's council of elders, the participants maintained that they only started hearing or using the term disasters in the early 1990s. One of them recalled how newscasts over the radio and television started talking about "natural disasters" after the earthquake in July 1990 and the Mt Pinatubo eruption in 1991. A retired teacher, who also sits as a member of the council of elders and was there during the consultation, also narrated how the social studies and biology textbooks for grade school presented the term natural disasters between 1994 and 1995.

To further strengthen this claim that the term disasters was only recently introduced to *Kankanaey* people, several organisation participants in separate interviews with them likewise referred to the 1990 earthquake and the 1991 volcanic eruption when natural disasters became the focus of media coverage and in everyday conversations amongst people. This coincides with what Steinberg (2006, p. 3) posits as the "emergence of 'natural disasters' as popular culture" that occurred in the late 19th century in the United States. Perry's (2007) assertion that the occurrence of natural events provide opportunities for the social construction of disasters also applies to this case.

To further understand the construction of disasters amongst contemporary *Kankanaey*, the narratives of university students and young professionals are significant to consider. The students and young professionals who attended the community consultations in the village of Madaymen claimed that their perspectives about disasters started from their recognition of the fact that there may be other interpretations of disasters in their villages. They particularly

emphasised the traditional perspectives held by the elders. Although they admitted that their own perspectives might not always be in agreement with traditional ones, they made it explicit that they still recognise and respect the wisdom shared by the elders.

These students and young professionals explained how they came to their own understandings of the term, disaster. They said that they derived their understandings of this term from what they learnt from school, read from books and watched on television. They also talked about their exposure and social contact with people outside of their villages as another influencing factor to the construction of their perspectives. Furthermore, they claimed that the information they got from social media, specifically from Facebook, helped them to conceptualise disasters.

In their group discussions, it was easy for them to arrive at a consensus on how to define disasters. To use their own terms, they all agreed that disasters were either man-made or natural. They came up with a list of examples to illustrate these. Man-made disasters included structural fires, occupational accidents for example, and natural ones were like typhoons, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions. In relation to these concepts, a representative from their groups explained in their sharing to the big group that in both instances, "modern technological responses are necessary to keep their indigenous communities safe from these forms of disasters." Examples of these modern technologies were things such as computerised early warning systems for more accurate weather forecasts, as well as more modern facilities for emergency and evacuation purposes.

Moving onto another village, the group of students and professionals in Lubo attempted to understand disasters in the context of their current struggles with mining by focusing on indigenous early warning systems. After identifying several indigenous early warning systems for typhoons, they discussed at length what they believed were still being observed and practised in their village and why some of them had been abandoned by the *Kankanaey* people. Their discussions moved into why some people support the activities of corporations because of their promises for advanced technological apparatuses that respond to disasters. However, they argued in their group discussions that these promises were not often true, and in the cases
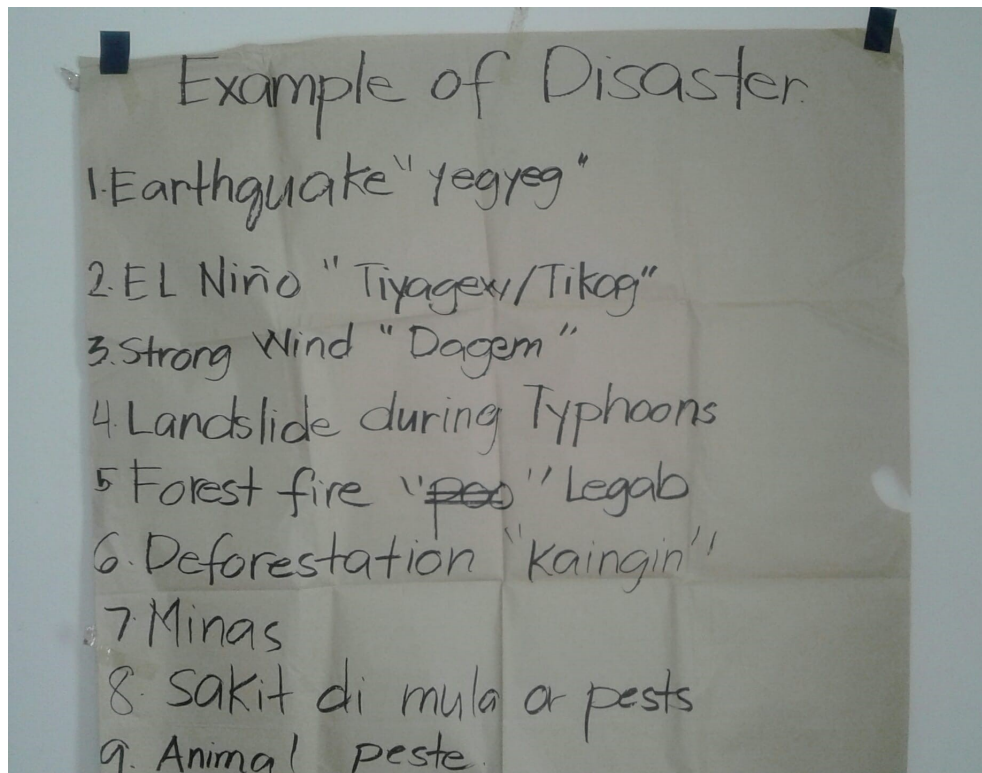
Figure 5.2: Examples of disasters as identified and ranked by the participants.

where they were delivered, it was to protect their facilities from disasters and not really the host communities. They agreed that it was necessary to promote and enhance indigenous warning systems and incorporate these into school curricula so that the children could learn and know about them. They believed that if people are informed of possible ways of responding to disasters on their own, they would not be so easily persuaded by the promises and "donations" from companies of advanced technologies that respond to disasters.

This point went deep in their group discussions. However, I observed how they got lost in the process at the moment they started agreeing on the fact that nowadays, disasters seemed to need more complex technological responses. They maintained their position that the activities and projects of corporations had exacerbated the effects of "natural disasters," and suggested that there should therefore be better technological solutions implemented to complement indigenous systems and practices. However, they then went back to the issue of over-reliance on technology and said that corporations must not take advantage of this need for more advanced disaster response as a means of seeking acceptance from indigenous

peoples to operate on their lands. It was through this group discussion that they settled on the conceptualisation that disasters are both natural and man-made.

Meanwhile in Palina, the group of students and professionals were very careful with their process of deriving what disasters meant to them. Local officials and community leaders checked on their discussions once in a while, and just like in any other *Kankanaey* village, the younger generations would "behave" in the presence of older relatives and community leaders. Their discussions largely reflected the sentiments and perspectives of almost everyone in the community consultations that disasters were equivalent to the challenges they faced due to mining. But like the other student and professional groups in Madaymen and Lubo, they also mentioned the difference between natural and man-made disasters. Interestingly, their concept of man-made disasters pointed back to mining activities which, to them, were the main cause of landslides, drought, and sinking ground.

Thus, for the group of students and young professionals in Palina, natural disasters could be responded to by using indigenous knowledge and approaches. However, they maintained that having advanced technological devices to help in more precise forecasting of typhoons and earthquake prediction would aid the present-day indigenous *Kankanaey* community. For response to man-made disasters, however, modern technologies could be more appropriate as indigenous knowledge systems were not equipped to face such issues. This included developing techniques for cleansing the chemicals used by a mining corporation in its exploration activities that were contaminating their water sources and farms.

I observed how the students and young professionals in all three community consultations were deeply engaged in their small group discussions in conceptualising disasters. They all considered the possible angles of the debates about the term. Amongst those that emerged from the group discussions were perspectives relating to indigenous knowledge and concepts, specifically early warning systems for typhoons and the concepts of natural and man-made disasters. They spoke about indigenous knowledge and perspectives by recounting their experiences with how their grandparents had used indigenous warning systems to predict the arrival, direction and strength of typhoons, and many more. Indigenous warning systems were

the first to be referenced by these groups in all three villages when their discussions centred on indigenous perspectives about disasters.

It is also important to note that, in all the community consultations the seemingly unclear perspectives about disasters came from the groups of students and young professionals. They expressed how the reality was not the in-between perspective of traditional and modern thinking about disasters as some of them would claim. Rather, the discussions seemed to be sometimes be grounded in traditional indigenous perspectives but sometimes also be contradictory by referring to natural disasters in their conversations. Sometimes their discussions appeared to be totally opposite to traditional perspectives but then go back to acknowledging the importance of indigenous knowledge and approaches such as the warning systems for typhoons. The same unclear responses came out of everyday conversations about disasters amongst the younger *Kankanaey* generations. One thing remained certain throughout all discussions, however, and that was the acknowledgement from teachers that the concept of disasters as natural and man-made were the perspectives that had been taught in the elementary and high school science curriculum up to the present day.

A similar pattern was noted in the responses amongst the group of community leaders in all three villages. First, there was an emphasis on the respect and recognition of the elders' perspectives. This was evidenced by constantly mentioning this phrase, "we respect whatever perspectives and wisdom the elders have said about disasters, and we just want to add that. . ." The additions would always have something to do with the dominant concepts of disasters as portrayed in the media and promoted in normative government DRR policies and programmes. As one of the community leaders said:

> *"We believe and share whatever the elders have said about disasters and we would like to add that there are also government laws and programmes that define what these are. As law abiding citizens, we also respect and work within that definition."* (Participant 13)

5.2.3   The apples have grown, the Zebras multiplied

This enforced learning of the English alphabet during the American occupation of the Philippines can be grounded in the work of Fanon (1967), who maintains that language has the power to colonise. Filipino sociologist, Randy David, argues that the American legacy of public education was intentionally built upon the colonial purpose of developing not only of a "modernised" but an "Americanised" Filipino (David, 2014). Thus, teaching English terms such as apples, zebras can be seen as one way of Americanising indigenous peoples. From that logic, the popular use of the English term disasters to refer to natural hazards amongst the present generation of *Kankanaey* people is an indication of how they may have been colonised with the use and promotion of disasters as an English term to refer to natural hazards such as typhoons. This is discussed in the second section of Chapter Six of this thesis.

Within this discourse, it would be likewise significant to look at how English is still used in the Philippines as a medium of education even after the departure of American control. During my elementary years, speaking in the local language inside the classrooms was penalised. The names of those who spoke in the *Kankanaey* language during class hours were announced after the flag ceremonies the next day and were either asked to pay a certain amount or do manual work as a form of punishment. Philippine linguists such as Bautista and Bolton (2008), Bernardo (2004), and Gonzalez (1998) have written extensively about the influence of English on Philippine society in general. As Gonzales (1998) notes, even after the emergence of Philippine English, Filipino society had already been conditioned to believe that anything associated with American English was more powerful and superior than their own.

Coming from these conversations about the colonising agenda of language and the power of the alphabet and English terms to perpetuate this, disasters as an English term has indeed been ingrained into the social and political fabric of contemporary indigenous everyday life. It is interesting to note that, as *Kankanaey* people have acknowledged, there is no exact translation of disasters into the local language, the English term has become more widely used in ordinary everyday conversations amongst the younger *Kankanaey* generations.

Participants interviewed from the government and nongovernment offices who identified themselves as indigenous were happy to know that people in the villages are talking about disasters and that they were using this English term in their everyday conversations. They believe that it is important for indigenous peoples to be educated about important English terms such as disasters. To them, this is one-way indigenous *Kankanaey* can expand their understanding of the conversations that are taking place in the rest of the world that may be significant to their existence and survival. In the same way, the American legacy of education in the Philippines is acknowledged by almost all participants to have contributed positively to the overall development of the country, including indigenous peoples.

However, as Pineda-Tinio (2002) maintains, one must not forget to see this within the context of history. Therefore, apples, zebras and disasters, as English terms, also need to be understood within the same historical context. The traditional elders echo this statement saying that no one wants to repeat an oppressive history. Responding to these dynamics between the traditional *Kankanaey* perspectives and those of the younger generations is further explored in part two of this chapter. The discussion is focused on how these two perspectives intersect in the current DRR responses and approaches, particularly to typhoons.

5.3 Part Two: Negotiating young generation's and the elders' perspectives on disasters in the contemporary DRR Responses and approaches

> *"Students and the professionals must speak out and share to the community what they have learned from their studies about disasters so that everyone can learn from them."* (Participant 9 - Community Consultation, March 2016)

That was what one of the community leaders said during the consultation meeting in the village of Palina. He was responding to a comment made by one of the students who said that their role in these consultation meetings should simply be to document the discussions. This was an important statement by a community leader as it encouraged the active engagement of the

students and young professionals in the community consultations. Their active participation in the process of dialogue in the community consultations brought out the significant perspectives mentioned earlier. Their perspectives also offered a springboard for the community leaders to reflect on what they referred to as the contemporary practice of DRR, which is based on both indigenous knowledge and modern knowledge. They associated indigenous knowledge with the elders and modern knowledge with the younger generations.

To recall the traditional indigenous perspectives in Chapter Four, the elders talked about sustaining values, ethics and practices that ensured their survival as a people. At the same time, they also expressed the need for external support to respond to the issues and changes such as development aggression that they say were beyond their capacities to respond to. The community leaders continued with their narratives from these elders' statements. They began their stories by saying that typhoons were becoming more and more challenging to respond to nowadays. Therefore, they said that external support was necessary as a DRR measure. A community leader from the village of Palina starts his story by highlighting the importance of recognising the younger generations' perspectives about disasters:

> "*It is important to consider what other people, especially the young generation, think about disasters and what they propose as appropriate responses. This will help us find ways to keep everyone safe from disasters. The elders emphasised in their stories that when the issues are beyond internal capacities to respond, then external support has to be sought . . .*" (Participant 8)

Conversations amongst the community leaders in the three villages around external support during typhoons focused their discussions on indigenous knowledge and scientific knowledge in DRR. They were in agreement that both these forms of knowledge are currently being practised in their villages. However, they recognised that indigenous knowledge was no longer appreciated by the younger generations. They emphasised the importance of recognising and reflecting on both these forms of knowledge when responding to disasters. This was an answer to a question from one of the students who asked how they could concretise the recognition of indigenous knowledge and perspectives in DRR practice. The community leaders

discussed this in depth in the context of disaster preparedness and mitigation, focusing on typhoons. According to them, this context provides a perfect space to discuss how indigenous and scientific perspectives about disasters can, in fact, work together. They reflected on their indigenous preparedness and mitigation practices and said that it was important to do this once in a while. As one of them said, "we can always claim that we still practise these indigenous preparedness and mitigation measures, but it is important to keep naming this indigenous knowledge in our conversations in ways that the younger generations will know what these are and be able to relate them to their current experiences in a more meaningful way." Chapter Eight of this thesis elaborates on this binary between indigenous and scientific knowledge in DRR.

5.3.1 Practising indigenous and scientific knowledge in disaster preparedness and mitigation

In understanding how indigenous disaster preparedness and mitigation practices can be conveyed to the younger generations in ways they can relate to, a community leader offered his son as an example. He said that one time he wanted to teach him how to do ikli or the creation of diversion canals to prevent the swelling of rivers during typhoons and the possibility of land erosion. His son, who was a university student, refused. After some days, he asked his son if he wanted to learn about "hydrology." He told him he could teach him some indigenous ways of doing this. His son became so interested that he went to the river ahead of him. This community leader was an engineering graduate, but he said he had chosen to be a farmer rather than practise his profession. He went on to say that, while indigenous knowledges on disaster preparedness and mitigation are important, there are some younger *Kankanaey*, like his son, who no longer appreciate this. In order to encourage everyone in the community to be proactive by practising disaster preparedness and mitigation measures that are meaningful to them, he believes that they need to be taught in a manner and language that they appreciate and understand. He said that *Kankanaey* children, especially those raised in the cities, may find scientific terms and processes more meaningful than the indigenous knowledges and terms. These therefore encourage them to still practise indigenous disaster preparedness and mitigation measures despite there being

more scientific ways of describing them. To him, this technique needed to be considered in current government DRR planning and response.

Echoing what this community leader in Palina had said earlier, community leaders in Madaymen lamented how rich indigenous *Kankanaey* knowledge and practices of early warning were no longer appreciated by the younger generations. Concurrently however, they also acknowledged that nowadays, scientific knowledge and approaches are needed to make people better prepared for typhoons. As a side-note to this discussion, it was noted that one of the automatic weather stations that was a part of a World Food Programme/USAID project in the municipality of Kibungan was installed in this village. The community leaders in this village proposed that *Kankanaey* people needed to promote and practise both indigenous and scientific knowledge and approaches in disaster preparedness and mitigation. According to them, this was to make sure that the elders' wisdom and indigenous knowledge about disaster preparedness and mitigation did not become extinct while, at the same time, keeping up with what they called "modern technologies" in DRR. They also alluded to the need for government and non-government organisations to promote and support this integrated practice in their DRR programmes and activities.

Community leaders in Lubo also maintained that the elders' perspectives about disasters were important to them and needed to be respected. At the same time, they also mentioned that other perspectives also needed to be known and considered in DRR planning and response. They did not talk about natural disasters. Instead, they talked about natural hazards such as typhoons and earthquakes and their experiences with these. They said that the integration of modern technology with their indigenous warning systems for typhoons would definitely be helpful in making them better prepared for these events. They then talked about their experiences with the 1990 earthquake and proposed that government programmes on DRR would also include technological ways that could predict when earthquakes would happen.

It is clear to the community leaders that indigenous and scientific knowledges and practices need to be promoted and used alongside each other to respond to the different needs of the *Kankanaey* people. Ultimately, integrating both indigenous and scientific ways of knowing

would better prepare these communities in the event of an imminent typhoon. However, whilst this is referred to in DRR literature (for example, see Gaillard & Mercer, 2013; Mercer, et al., 2010), the pragmatic application of it remains unseen by the community leaders. However, they talked about ways by which *Kankanaey* could practise both indigenous and scientific knowledge in their preparedness and mitigation measures for typhoons. In further discussing this, they revisited some of the traditional *Kankanaey* preparedness and mitigation practices and also explained how these were, and continue to be, practised in contemporary *Kankanaey* society.

5.3.1.1   Indigenous disaster preparedness and mitigation practices

The following table (Table 5.1) presents some *Kankanaey* preparedness and mitigation practices for typhoons and how these are referred to and practised at present. The first column presents the traditional *Kankanaey* terms for the practice with the second column explaining how these were done in the traditional *Kankanaey* way. The third column comments on how this is applied or modified in the present *Kankanaey* community. I have collated these practices from the stories of the community leaders in the three villages:

Equally important in finding ways to negotiate the young *Kankanaey* people's perspectives on disasters with those of the elders is going back to the indigenous warning systems for typhoons. As a community leader from Palina says:

> "*. . . by naming what these indigenous warning systems are, we can be aware whether these are being practised or not in the contemporary time. Then that makes us search for the reasons why these are no longer being practiced at the moment and we can then create a bridge between these and the current perspectives about typhoons.*"

The community leaders in Lubo believe that indigenous preparedness and mitigation practices emanate from these warning systems – some of these warn the communities days or even months before a typhoon actually occurs.

Table 5.1: Some indigenous preparedness and mitigation practices in the contemporary *Kankanaey* **society.**

Traditional *Kankanaey* preparedness and mitigation practices	Description	Applicability to the contemporary *Kankanaey* society
Manlukas	This is the practice of replacing old materials of the house to make sure that they are not easily ripped off by strong winds. In the olden days when houses were made up of nipa huts, the entire neighbourhood was involved ingathering cogon grasses and rono sticks and putting them in place. Each member of the neighbourhood would have specific roles to perform depending on their "expertise."	With the changes in the types of houses at present, the practice is still in place with community members normally checking their houses to look for repairs before the onset of the typhoon season. However, this is no longer done at the community scale,but rather by members of the family. For some, they pay professional carpenters to do the repairs for them.
Man-ikli	*Man-ikli* is the practice of building diversion canals before the onset of the rainy or typhoon season. This ensures that strong flows will not cause landslides near residential, farming and other areas frequented by humans.	The concept is still practised. However, as a community leader in Palina mentioned, scientific terms have been used to make this practice more appealing and encouraging to the young.
Tadaw	*Tadaw* is a forest management practice of the *Kankanaey*, where instead of cutting down an entire tree for agricultural of domestic purposes (e.g.,for firewood), old branches and twigs are cut down. This allows the trees to live and grow new branches. The elders say that this is important as a disaster preparedness and mitigation measure because allowing the trees to live ensures the sustainability of watersheds and contributes to the prevention of soil erosion.	More and more *Kankanaey* families are shifting to the use of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) for cooking and firewood is seldom needed for domestic purposes, except in community rituals. However, this form of indigenous forest management practice is being encouraged for farming purposes, where the cutting down of trees is needed.

5.3.1.2   Indigenous warning systems

The community leaders in Palina explained how there are often signs before a typhoon occurs. They narrate how these can be observed from the changes taking place in the natural environment. Amongst the popular signs are those conveyed by the heavenly bodies, the movement of insects from the trees to lower surfaces such as stone walls, and being sensitive

to the changes in the behaviours of animals and migratory birds. They add that these natural hazards such as flash floods and landslides can often have warning signs too. However, they clarified that the time between warning signs and the actual occurrence of the impacts of these natural hazards is sometimes too short and leaves people unable to act before they occur.

They also explained the nature of flash floods, which are common in rivers situated at the foot of the mountains. As a warning sign, they described how the rivers turn cloudy and then muddy. After this, flash floods could follow in a few minutes or even seconds. The roaring sound from the river and the appearance of a rainbow where heavy rains have occurred are also among the warning signs, they add. Again, however, they made mention of the fact that the time between the actual occurrence of the flash flood and the appearance of these signs is very short. Dekens (2007) maintains that indigenous people's sensitivity to their natural environment, which develops from their close relationship with nature, are important in being able to notice these warning signs. The community leaders confirmed this by saying that one has to develop a "special bond" with nature to be able to notice these warning signs.

In Madaymen, the community leaders discussed landslides as an effect of typhoons. They recalled their experiences in the past, where some of the villagers had been buried alive on their farms because of landslides occurring from typhoons. They said that landslides often start with small amounts of loose soil falling from slopes. Then, plants or trees on the surface start moving. According to them, one can be very sure once these signs are noticed that a huge landslide could occur in a matter of seconds. They warned that no one should take the risk of staying in places where these signs start to show. They said that once these signs are noticed, people need to leave the place as quickly as possible. They recalled an incident in the past when a woman was buried alive in a massive landslide on her farm. According to them, her husband, who had survived the incident, had told them that he first noticed loose soil coming down from the slopes near the paddies where his wife was working before the huge landslide occurred.

These community leaders in this village acknowledged that the introduction of modern means of generating warning systems affected how these indigenous warning systems are valued and practised in contemporary *Kankanaey* society. According to them, with the current

demands of life, most *Kankanaey* people at present find it easy and more convenient to just listen to weather forecasts over their radios or televisions than pay attention to the indigenous warning signs. However, they also mentioned how the information generated from the weather forecasts on the radios and televisions are not precise so they propose better technologies that could make more accurate predictions. Having said this, they maintained that, while the *Kankanaey*'s access to scientific warning systems is prolific through the radio and television, indigenous warning systems still matter.

The community leaders made further efforts to illustrate how the elders' perspectives about typhoons can be translated into modern disaster mitigation practices and activities that resonate with the younger *Kankanaey* generations. They referred to technocratic government and nongovernment projects in explaining this. They believe that these projects reflect how traditional indigenous perspectives and knowledges on DRR can come together with modern or scientific perspectives and approaches that can be appreciated and easily understood by contemporary *Kankanaey* society.

5.3.1.3   Land use planning and the technical delineation of forests, rivers and watersheds

Assigning land use and delineating natural resources are an old practice amongst indigenous peoples in the Cordillera region (see Prill-Brett, 1994). However, due to what community leaders refer to as an increasing influence of development and modernisation, these are no longer observed by many. One of the members of the people's organisation in Palina explained how these traditional indigenous land and natural resources used techniques were important disaster mitigation practices. He said that forests and watersheds play a vital role in *Kankanaey* warning systems for typhoons. He explained this by saying that some of the important warning signs such as the direction and strength of winds can be derived from the movements and sounds of trees in the forests. He also said that migratory birds, which are important in indigenous warning systems, could be spotted along riverbanks and watershed areas. *Kankanaey* named these typhoons after migratory birds whose arrival into the community gave them an idea about the strength of the typhoon and how long it would last.

This community leader argues that land use and the technical delineation of natural resources is important in making sure that the forests, rivers and watersheds are protected. This is because these spaces are where some of the indigenous warning signals are strongest. He further notes that land use planning and the delineation of natural resources prevent the effects of typhoons such as flash floods and landslides. Another community leader explained the role of watersheds in ensuring domestic and agricultural water supply, which allows local farmers to farm even during the dry season. This was confirmed in the discussions with community leaders in Madaymen, who also claimed to have problems with water for irrigation during the summer season.

Members of the people's organisations from all three villages who came to the NCIP-facilitated community consultation maintained that indigenous practices of land use and natural resource delineation were strictly followed in the past even without instruction to do so. As such, one of them spoke to the fact that specific areas such as burial grounds, forests and watershed were contained and all human activities within and nearby were prohibited. He added that residents complied with these unwritten laws. However, this seems to be changing and at present, these are being violated not only by the residents themselves but more so by corporations wanting to invade their lands. He claimed that the non-recognition of these indigenous ways and processes of land use and natural resource delineation have made the villages more susceptible to the effects of typhoons, such as landslides.

The community leader went on to say that official delineation of land use and natural resources in their villages will help protect their forests, rivers and watersheds. This is so since some *Kankanaey* peoples themselves and especially corporations subscribe to and respect formal laws rather than the indigenous practices governing the area. Another member of the same people's organisation cited the example of one village within the municipality of Kibungan that had its watershed areas delineated with the help of a local non-government organisation. According to him, this was helpful to the villagers in taking the necessary steps to protecting their natural resources.

Both community leaders claimed that the process of delineating land use and natural

resources in the villages takes into consideration indigenous and modern knowledge. For instance, they said that the elders must be involved especially in the identification of communal areas such as watershed and forests. After this, engineers help with the technical delineation of these areas. Once the engineers have helped delineate the area, local legislators help to formulate laws to declare and support these delineations. By doing this, they both believe that those who do not subscribe to indigenous knowledge and practices in land use and delineation of natural resources as disaster mitigation measures are mandated by the local law to abide by these. The two community leaders also mentioned how this process helped engage the younger generations of *Kankanaey*, as many of them have been active in the technical delineation process.

5.3.1.4   Reforestation and agro-forestry projects and activities

In relation to land use and the delineation of natural resources such as forests, rivers and watersheds, community leaders from the three villages believe that disaster preparedness and mitigation measures also need to focus on the restoration of erosion-prone slopes and denuded mountains. Several reasons for this and an analysis of the denudation of mountains was presented in the different village-based consultations. Participants from barangay Lubo referred to mining activities as the main cause of forest and mountain denudation. They also referred to forest fires caused by human activities as a secondary reason. Participants from the other two barangays pointed to the operation of a logging concession in the late 1980s along with human activities and negligence to their stewardship roles as factors leading to the destruction of their forests.

Meanwhile, three participants revealed in individual interviews that the expansion of agricultural farms into forest lands has also been a cause of alarm for some. Yet, a lengthy discussion emerged from this concern in informal conversations with community leaders in the three villages. They maintained that the community was considering the best ways of solving this problem but, because it is an issue between people's livelihood and forest protection and management, it needs to be carefully reflected upon before any action is taken.

Government and NGO-led agroforestry and reforestation projects were considered

important by the community leaders in Lubo in curbing the denudation of forests. They explained how these were helpful in restoring watersheds and preventing landslides. However, an issue emerged from this conversation as community leaders in Palina raised concerns over seeds and seedlings that were distributed for reforestation projects by external organisations, which allegedly endangered local plants. They cited the case of Mt. Kil-kili, a sacred mountain in the village, which has been one of the sites for reforestation projects by both government and nongovernment organisations. The projects were aimed at promoting the diversity of forest species on the mountain and reforesting areas that have been denuded. However, local people observed that some of these seedlings turned out to be a kind of a vine that killed some of the smaller indigenous plants nearby.

This brought into discussion the importance of grounding these external projects in indigenous knowledge. The community leaders in Palina shared how this could be done by citing the case of Iyaman, Inc., a local NGO working on environmental management programmes. In their reforestation projects, the community leaders explained how, instead of outsiders bringing the seeds and seedlings for planting, they encouraged local people to collect and propagate indigenous seeds and use these for the reforestation efforts. The community are therefore actively engaged and look forward to introducing indigenous seed preservation techniques to the process. To put this plan into action, they explained how they planned to secure the seeds in a communal storage space to which where everyone had easy access. They are hopeful that this process of propagating indigenous seeds and seedlings will not only be used for reforestation projects but also for agricultural crops. They are also hopeful that bringing these indigenous knowledges and processes into these government programmes and projects will contribute to the resilience of contemporary *Kankanaey* to disasters. These community leaders who gathered in the NCIP-led consultation meeting say that projects like these which offer the opportunity for indigenous and modern perspectives and responses to disasters need to be promoted. They underscored how opportunities like these offered a pathway to integrating traditional indigenous perspectives with modern conceptualisations and approaches to disasters. They all agreed that this could be done ultimately through bridging the Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plan (ADSDPP) and the municipal disaster

management plan. The ancestral domain, as defined in earlier chapters, is a state-sanctioned development tool for indigenous peoples in the Philippines.

5.3.2 Bridging the ADSDPP and the Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction Plans

Looking at the Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plan (ADSDPP) of the municipality, I found out that several indigenous knowledge and practices could indeed be applied to DRR. Most of the sustaining practices that the traditional elders talked about in Chapter Four were also mentioned in this document. From what I learned from the community leaders, the process of crafting this plan was a long and tedious one and, although they know that the final copy went through several revisions, including those by external consultants, they believe that the indigenous knowledge and practices contained within them are truly reflective of the *Kankanaey* people. They even recalled the traditional elders who were involved in the identification and definition-making process of the different indigenous knowledge systems and practices described in the plan.

Some of these community leaders who participated to the NCIP-led consultation stayed behind after the meeting to continue discussing how this development tool could work for indigenous peoples. Their discussions were focused on how this plan had actually been utilised as a development tool. However, it is important to note from their discussions that the ADSDPP seemed to have been ignored in the larger development processes in the municipality. I would like to make it clear here that this was the impression of the community leaders who talked about it. Those at the local government who worked with the development process in the municipality could also have their own story. Nevertheless, some community leaders said that they do not recall any development projects by which the ADSDPP had been used as a framework for the implementation. As a side-note to this, a participant from one of the NGOs that I interviewed shared that one of the considerations of her organisation in including the municipality of Kibungan as a project area was the availability of its ADSDPP. However, she did not make it clear how the organisation actually utilised this document in the implementation of its development programmes with *Kankanaey* people.

I also had a look at the municipal disaster risk reduction and management plan of the local government. While this identified the different forms of hazards and the proposed responses for each of these, indigenous knowledge and practices were not clearly reflected as a response or approach. The same comment was raised by the community leaders in the consultation meeting. They acknowledged the labour and dedication of the people who formulated the plan. However, they suggest that it would be more meaningful if the rich indigenous knowledge systems and practices of the *Kankanaey* people were incorporated in this document. They argued that their knowledge and practices can be easily located in the ADSDPP. Furthermore, they believe that incorporating the indigenous knowledge that is contained in the ADSDPP to the municipal disaster risk reduction and development plan paves the way for negotiating more relevant DRR responses and approaches to contemporary contexts. As a community leader in Lubo said, "*by recognising both the perspectives of the elders and those of the younger generations and putting these together in the practice of DRR in this municipality, we can facilitate the building of resilience for everyone to disasters.*"

Indeed, the ADSDPP is a great document and this needs to be used as a development tool for *Kankanaey* communities. *Kankanaey* knowledge systems and practices have been perfectly documented in this plan, but as a community leader in Palina said, an emphasis on the importance of indigenous knowledge in DRR will make the bridging of this document with the municipal disaster risk reduction and management plan easier. Reflecting on what this community leader said, I want to acknowledge here that I was given a copy of the 2014 version of the ADSDDP. According to the local government office concerned, they had an updated version of the plan at the time of writing this, but copies were not yet available. That updated version might have made specific references to DRR, which was what the community leader from Palina was trying to ensure.

Bringing together the ADSDPP and the municipal disaster risk reduction plan is an idea that came from the community leaders as they reflected on what would create a more disaster-resilient *Kankanaey* community at present. These community leaders argued that this was a way by which they could still keep traditional indigenous perspectives and practices of

DRR alive while embracing new and modern ways of responding to disasters and life in general. These thoughts are all great. The opportunity to bridge the ADSDPP and the municipal disaster risk reduction and management plan offers hope for the future of a more meaningful DRR for indigenous people like the *Kankanaey*. However, bringing together indigenous knowledge and technocratic approaches needs more careful thought around the issues of power and power relations that are discussed in much of the DRR literature on integrating indigenous and scientific knowledge (for example, see Gaillard & Mercer, 2013; Mercer, et al., 2010). This is because power and knowledge are intrinsically connected and mutually supported (Foucault, 1982). Indeed, the good intentions of the community leaders to bridge indigenous knowledge with technocratic approaches can also open up opportunities for power to further disenfranchise indigenous knowledge (Agrawal, 1995) and fulfil the colonising agenda of the English term, disasters.

5.4   Conclusion

This chapter highlights how language has the power to perpetuate a hegemonic agenda (Fanon, 1967). This is reflected in the discussions about how external factors, such as Western education, have shaped, and continue to shape, indigenous people's thinking and responses to disasters. The indigenous *Kankanaey* people talked about how they were taught the English alphabet during the period of American colonisation by using fruits, plants and objects from America to represent each of the letters. According to Philippine linguistic studies, this was how Western education succeeded in the Americanisation of the Filipinos (for example, see Bautista & Bolton, 2008; Bernardo, 2004). *Kankanaey* community leaders reflected on this historical process and related it back to the popularisation of the English term, "disasters." They became suspicious that, just like the English terms that were used to teach the alphabet, there could also be a hidden agenda in the introduction of this term to indigenous peoples. They came up with this idea when they realised that they could not find an exact translation of the English term, disasters, in the *Kankanaey* language.

The community leaders acknowledged the importance and contribution of Western education to their lives as indigenous *Kankanaey* people. However, they also recognised how their lives were in a continual and rapid process of change thanks to an array of external influences. They were aware that with these changes, the wisdom and knowledge of the elders that has sustained them for a long time is starting to get under-appreciated and seldom practised. They reflected this specifically in the case of disasters and DRR responses and approaches. They therefore proposed that indigenous knowledge and traditional DRR practices needed to be negotiated with what they called "modern technologies and approaches." Doing this, they say, may allow them to keep their indigenous knowledge and approaches to DRR alive while at the same time being able to catch up with modern technologies and enhance their overall resilience. However, as pointed out earlier, there are some reflections about issues of power and power relations that need to be carefully made when negotiating these perspectives and approaches to disasters to ensure it is done in a just and sensitive way.

Chapter 6

Institutional Responses to Disasters

6.1   Introduction

Institutional responses to disasters are important when understanding the conceptualisation of disasters amongst indigenous peoples. This chapter provides an overview of the national laws and policies on DRR as well as mandates of government and non-government organisations (NGOs) in the Philippines that influence institutional responses to disasters. It presents how these laws and policies are shaped by international agreements like the Hyogo Framework and the Philippines Disaster Management Act of 2010. Government policies and pronouncements that came after the Sendai Framework would all talk about how these were to be crafted in line with, or in recognition of, these international agreements.

The narratives in this chapter present the views of participants from different organisations. These organisations include government agencies and local governments, NGOs (international and local), as well as private corporations. These organisations are mentioned throughout the following chapter. With the exception of participants from the international NGOs and national government offices, most of those interviewed at the local level were indigenous peoples themselves, although not necessarily *Kankanaey*. The Philippines has various groups of indigenous peoples and the *Kankanaey* people are just one among

them (Prill-Brett, 1994). It is, however, worth noting that the turn-out of participants from these organisations was not based upon any recruitment preferences of having indigenous participants. According to the National Statistics and Coordination Board (NSCB, 2015), the overall population of the Cordillera Administrative Region in 2015 is 1.72 million. The National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP, 2015) estimates that 1.25 million are indigenous peoples. This is roughly 90% of the total population of the region. This could be one of the explanations as to why indigenous peoples dominated participation in this research. Another consideration could be that, since the invitation to participate was based on the interest and willingness of the participants themselves, indigenous peoples find the topic relevant to them, and are thus more willing to participate. It cannot also be discounted that, since the researcher is an indigenous researcher herself, organisation staff stepped in to participate as a gesture of support. This is very cultural amongst indigenous peoples in the Cordillera region of the Philippines.

The first section of the chapter discusses the claim by these participants from organisations that they "recognise" indigenous peoples' perspectives on disasters in their responses and approaches to DRR. Moreover, indigenous staff from some of these organisations articulated their rootedness in indigenous culture which, to them, was the basis of how they delivered their programmes to indigenous communities. However, they emphasised in their discussions that this sense of rootedness to the indigenous culture does not mean they are able to influence or change existing institutional policies and programmes on DRR to fit indigenous peoples' situations. Because of this, they talked about the issues and challenges that came alongside their efforts to advocate for the recognition of these cultural factors in their organisations' programmes and services. In relation to these challenges, the second section illustrates that these indigenous staff in government and non-government organisations are more likely to abide by their institutional mandates and accountabilities than assert the cultural rootedness they mentioned earlier. Institutional policies and frameworks remain the basis of their work for DRR. As participants from organisations generally talked about being "neutral" with their perspectives on disasters, this stance therefore raises questions around what Freire (2004) argues as neutrality only favouring the dominant.

6.2 Part One: A progression from cultural rootedness

6.2.1 Looking Back: indigenous roots as the foundation for DRR practice by indigenous professionals

One of the common statements that came out of the interviews with indigenous organisation participants was that, while they have to be held accountable to the mandates of their organisations in terms of DRR responses and approaches, they make sure they always refer to their indigenous culture in terms of implementing the programme policies and services. When asked why they had to do this, the common responses were, "that was where we came from and we have to make sure that we bring this as an advocacy in our work places." In his book, Look to the Mountains, Cajete (1994) talks about the importance of the practice of looking back to the history of their villages in moving forward to attain a vision of the future for indigenous peoples. In the context of the Philippines, Malanes (2002) underscores culture as the foundation of any actions indigenous peoples take. This sense of embeddedness to one's indigenous culture is also traced to what most organisation participants referred to as an expression of their respect and reverence to their ancestors. Indigenous professionals also expressed that looking back to their cultural upbringing as foundation for their disaster management practices was their way of upholding the elders' teachings. This is important to note as the elders lament in Chapter Four about indigenous *Kankanaey* professionals who they claim to have become abusive of their power and social status and have consequently become oppressive to their own people.

This form of reverence that is accorded to the elders by these indigenous professionals is expressed in what a social worker from one of the regional government offices said about how her formal education was never enough to get her through her work. She said that she goes home to her indigenous community to consult with the elders about making decisions at work that she thinks would impact the lives of indigenous peoples:

> "*I am clear about the mandates of my job. I can simply follow these and I am going to be a good social worker to my organisation. However, there are instances*

when I believe I still need to seek the elders' advice in terms of making decisions in my work that will have an impact to indigenous peoples' lives." (Participant 22)

Another participant revealed that the ethics she applies to her work were the principles of life she learned from her indigenous community. She admits that, having been raised in the city, there are quite a number of things that she does not know about her indigenous culture. However, she was quick to add that this does not mean that she knows nothing about it at all. She says that one of the greatest insights she learned from her great-grandfather, who was an elder in their village, was to always think and act in the context of the "we." In saying this, she believes that strengthening indigenous communities' resilience to disasters has to start from the basic indigenous practices of coming out from one's own self-interests to acting upon and provide people with the means to move beyond their basic survival needs. She further believes that doing this allows each one the chance to discover their potential in participating in the building of resilience and capacities of their community to respond to disasters. DRR literatures have acknowledged this as well. For instance, Cannon (2008) points out that when the barriers to people's potential are addressed, these people are able to participate more fully in building their own community's resilience to disasters.

The government programme that this participant works with has, however, been criticised by some for its "dole-out" nature, but she sees it otherwise. She asserts how, at the core of indigenous communities is the belief in sustaining one another at a moment when people are not capable of taking care of themselves or their families, and that this has made survival possible for them. She further argues that the gesture of providing for those in need (which others see as a form of dole-out) has made differences in the recovery of individuals and families from their situation. In relation to DRR, she asserts that responses and approaches to disasters have to be based on this principle. She argues, "*how can I even talk about empowering people and ask them to participate in a capacity building activity for disaster risk reduction if they are hungry?*" Having said this, she highlights that indigenous peoples value hard work and they must take responsibility to develop themselves, work towards coming out from their economic situation and not simply wait for social services to come to their doorstep.

A participant from the provincial Red Cross seconded this view by explaining how, despite his responsibilities to work within professional mandates, he saw the need to respect and recognise elders' perspectives and wisdom on disasters as crucial to the DRR process. An indigenous person himself, he believed that his indigenous culture continues to be the foundation of his commitment to making sure that indigenous perspectives and their needs are recognised in the planning and delivery of his organisation's programmes and services. This, he mentioned, also applies to other advocacy work in general. He argued that there is no single definition of disasters and stated that indigenous peoples' perceptions necessitate a timely review of institutional efforts and programmes along this line. This is echoed in Kruger, Bankoff, Cannon, Orlowski, and Schipper (2015), who argue that DRR responses have to be relevant to the cultural contexts of the people running it. Furthermore, this official from the Red Cross said that both local government officials and the elders needed to be considered with equal importance by those bringing development services to indigenous communities. The common practice amongst these outsiders, he added, is that they only consult and work with the local government officials. He claimed that outsiders needed to know that indigenous communities operate on two systems of leadership: political and indigenous. Therefore, he encouraged external organisations to recognise these two forms of leadership in working with indigenous communities. He believes that doing so makes the programme truly responsive to the community and lessens the chances of creating more risks to the indigenous peoples' survival with its implementation.

In further explaining his thoughts, he cited the example of post-disaster medical missions. He wanted to make clear that he was not against medical missions because they were definitely important to indigenous communities. However, he criticised the relevance of this intervention to the situation of indigenous peoples. He explained how post-disaster medical missions focused on providing medicines to indigenous peoples, and could be creating more disasters in their communities instead of responding to their problems. He explains the high costs of medicines, specifically antibiotics, which he says indigenous peoples may not be able to afford and sustain. He argues that reality attests to indigenous families often putting on hold buying medicines or seeking health services in favour of survival needs they consider to be more urgent. With this,

he raises the danger of being exposed to medicines such as antibiotics that will not be sustained and could lead to more health risks than the disease that they are trying to cure. He states:

> *"Ok, so there's a post-disaster medical mission and someone was diagnosed to have an infection. That person is advised to take antibiotics. Well and good. However, if that person was supposed to take antibiotics for seven days and he was given only 10 pieces of these with a prescription and an advice to buy the rest from the pharmacy in the city which is about 7 hours bus ride away from the village, then that can really be a disaster! The patient will either not take the medicine at all or finish only the 10 pieces and that's it."* (Participant 15)

As a health professional himself, he says that going back to the indigenous sustaining practices and helping someone, not only during or after disasters, has to be applied by health professionals and organisations as their contribution to DRR at large. He believes that preventive health programmes and services would work more for indigenous peoples given some cultural considerations. He adds that providing health services and support in the absence of disasters are the best ways that health practitioners like him can fit into indigenous people's responses to disasters, which is more in line with mitigation measures. Keim (2008) raises a similar point and argues that public health professionals and agencies play a pivotal role in building community resilience to disasters.

The narratives of indigenous professionals provide that they often go beyond their job descriptions for their indigenous communities. They clarified that what they do is development concerns in general. A medical social worker in one of the major government hospitals in the region added her voice to this discussion by saying that it is almost impossible for the hospital to allow indigenous rituals in hospital premises. However, since she knows that the cleansing rituals are very important amongst indigenous peoples who have been involved in emergencies and disasters, she makes sure that she provides some spaces for indigenous peoples who approach her for help to perform any urgent rituals. She adds, "*if we can have prayer rooms in hospitals, then why are indigenous peoples not allowed to have a safe space to perform their own healing and cleansing rituals?*" Since the rituals are a part of indigenous people's DRR,

she proposes that disaster management authorities have to reflect on this in terms of policy and programme formulation.

To conclude, indigenous professionals who participated in this research say that the importance of appreciating their cultural upbringing in their work is that they can take creative steps to incorporate indigenous processes and approaches in their organisations for DRR programme planning and implementation. Malanes (2002) maintains that culture is the dynamo that runs the turbine of development. Non-indigenous organisation participants agree. Indeed, a staff member of a national government agency said that his experience working at the grassroots level proved that culture was an essential dimension of any development work.

6.2.2 Integrating indigenous ethics, knowledge, and approaches to DRR roles and functions

While indigenous professionals talked about their sense of rootedness to indigenous ethics, knowledge and perspectives as anchors for their DRR practice, a number of scholars have raised the need for the integration of indigenous and scientific approaches (for example, see Gaillard & Mercer, 2013; Mercer et al., 2010; Wisner, 1995). In this sense, these two perspectives come together. In this section, organisation participants share their experiences on how they have recognised the sense of rootedness to culture by integrating indigenous ethics, knowledge and approaches to their mandated roles and functions within the agencies and organisations they work. A participant from the Department of Social Welfare and Development said that there were no specific guidelines for someone to follow in terms of ensuring the recognition and integration of indigenous knowledge and approaches in DRR. One therefore had to be creative enough to be able to make this happen and gain support from the organisations for their implementation. Given the seemingly challenging path towards generating organisational support for what these indigenous professionals described as advocacy within their organisations, it would be useful to look at how much an indigenous professional or someone who is supportive of the advocacy work may be able to apply this creativity in their development practice. The following stories were based on the narratives of participants from government and NGO organisations.

A social worker with a local NGO explained how technical the terms used in DRR planning with indigenous peoples in the villages was. She believes that allowing indigenous peoples to fully participate in the planning process starts from helping them to understand and relate well to the topic. She says that these technical terms need to be translated into the local language so that people in the villages can understand. She believes that it is the role of indigenous professionals themselves, whether they are directly involved in DRR work or not, to make sure that they help in translating these terms for their communities. By doing this, she claims that people can interact better with each other and thus contribute more knowledge to the planning process. She adds that doing this does not need to be sanctioned by her organisation. It is through such processes that DRR goes beyond its normative practices:

> *"When I am in the communities and there are planning activities such DRR with other organisations (not necessarily with my agency), I sit down with my own people and translate for them. It is helpful especially in cases where none of their staff members facilitating the activity are from the community."* (Participant 33)

Another social worker who holds a senior position in the DRR unit at the regional office of the Department of Social Welfare and Development adds that, whenever the elders' knowledge and wisdom is needed for disaster planning and management, it has to be sought. He believes that, as the sources of indigenous knowledge, their participation needs to be ensured in such planning processes. However, he clarified that this does not mean inviting them to participate in the technical workshops, which can be culturally inappropriate. Instead, he believes that if one is serious about an inclusive DRR, people have to go to the elders and seek their wisdom. Like his colleague who stated earlier that there were no laws or organisational policies that prohibit one from doing this, approval from organisations needs not be sought for processes like this one. He says:

> *"Generating indigenous peoples' participation to DRR planning activities in the villages depends on the innovations of the staff in the field for community organising. These processes need not be approved by anyone in the organisational hierarchy."* (Participant 18)

He adds that there are always opportunities to consider and integrate indigenous issues and processes in the planning and implementation of development programmes and services. However, this depends on if one is creative and smart enough to be able to justify its inclusion in terms of ensuring that all deliverables of the activities have been met in the reports. He cites an example of a DRR training that his office supported, wherein the focus was on indigenous knowledge and processes. He encouraged government staff to learn how to maximise opportunities and resources within and outside of their agencies. He argues that, if a proposal for DRR activity could not be supported with one's own office, and the staff knew that it was really needed by the indigenous communities one worked with, then there would always be possibilities in other units within or outside of the organisation to implement the activities required. He mentioned the example of a request from an indigenous village in the region for the continuation of community dialogues on disaster management that his office could not accommodate but how he was supported by another unit as part of its family development projects. He did, however, point to how these opportunities were often difficult to come by and to eventuate: "*the problem about accessing these opportunities is no one tells you about them. You need to be well oriented. Know what these opportunities are. Know who the crucial people are to talk to and most importantly, learn how to access them.*"

Staff of the Department of Social Welfare and Development at the national level recognised the efforts that these social workers make for the integration of indigenous knowledge and approaches to DRR in mainstream government programmes and services. An official who worked closely with indigenous social workers and staff said:

> "*The changes that took place in national programme framework to include indigenous peoples' perspectives, values and practices which include those in DRR, owe it from indigenous peoples in this agency who worked hard for its realisation.*" (Participant 31)

Meanwhile, a participant from the regional Office of Civil Defence agreed that every government office is mandated by law to follow certain procedures and rules in the

implementation of their programmes and services. However, she also emphasised that it is the responsibility of everyone who works within the system to make sure that these do not become a hindrance for people in the long run. This ensures that DRR activities and processes remain beneficial and relevant to indigenous communities. She argues that organisation staff should not interpret the laws and mandates with narrow visions that delimit their creativity to be responsive to situations on the ground. For instance, whilst she acknowledges that DRR laws are top-down in nature, she strongly believes that the planning that is run by local government units must follow a bottom-up approach (see Hiwasaki, Luna, Syamsidik & Shaw, 2014). By allowing this process, she claims that the local knowledge and practices of people in the villages will be incorporated into the formulation of local DRR plans.

In explaining this, this participant form the Office of the Civil Defence underscored the commitment of an indigenous professional, specifically the local DRR officers, in facilitating a truly community-driven and inclusive DRR. "*Our local disaster risk reduction officers must become instruments in bringing the people onto the bandwagon for a locally driven DRR*", she says. Furthermore, this participant raises the indispensable commitment of people who run planning activities to ensure greater participation amongst indigenous peoples in the villages. Her insights echo the call of several DRR scholars to make community participation in DRR planning and response a mandatory process so as to ensure that indigenous needs and capacities are incorporated in DRR plans and programmes (Hiwasaki et al., 2014; Lennie, 1999).

6.2.3 Organisational barriers to integrating indigenous knowledge and approaches to DRR practice

While it may be easier for some professionals to find ways of bringing indigenous perspectives, processes and approaches into their organisational mandates, others are met with challenges that prevent them from doing so. A participant from the local government who used to work as a development consultant with the national government agency's programme for indigenous peoples commented that, while it appears that indigenous knowledge and practices have been recognised and incorporated into the agency's DRR programmes, it is in fact the other way around; the indigenous peoples' unit has recognised and incorporated this into its

programme framework instead. She says that it is easier that way than bringing in indigenous perspectives into the mainstream DRR unit of the agency. This resonated in a question raised by a staff member of another national office that works for DRR when asked to comment about their programmes and services for indigenous peoples. Her response was, "why should there be a separate programme on disaster risk reduction for indigenous peoples? We are inclusive in this office and we do not give special attention to a specific sector." This can be seen as a misconception about what being inclusive means but, as the development consultant notes, it somehow mirrors the resistance from some people within institutions to explore new perspectives and possibilities that can make DRR programme design and delivery more meaningful and relevant to the people they serve.

Indigenous professionals in government offices shared some experiences that help to explain why it is challenging for them to advocate for indigenous perspectives and approaches in DRR in their respective agencies and organisations. One of them mentioned that they had experienced colleagues and supervisors belittling their ideas. This professional believes that this attitude toward them traces back to the historical discrimination of indigenous peoples in the Philippines (Razon & Hensman, 1976). Another participant added that she had experienced the same thing from her colleagues: "*Whenever I start talking about how the programme could be made more relevant to the indigenous peoples we work with, they stop me and because of that experience, I do not want to say anything anymore during staff meetings.*" The participant in this story said that, because of this form of treatment from her colleagues, issues and capacities in DRR that she witnesses on the ground as a fieldworker are being missed out, which ultimately impacts on the relevance of programme designs and delivery.

Going back to the development consultant's narratives, she affirms what indigenous social workers say about how community organising processes in the ground can be creative and provide space for the recognition and integration of their perspectives in disaster responses and management. However, she emphasised that this "art" of doing community work has not been institutionalised by most organisations. Strange and Bayley (2008) state that the institutionalisation of local approaches is one way of ensuring the promotion and sustainability

of community development gains, and how international development must endeavour to attain this. However, an indigenous staff member of an international NGO said that most development programmes already have predesigned frameworks that are simply being implemented on the ground. She argues that even the good practices that are often sought from partner communities are determined by the organisation rather than the local people themselves. In the field of DRR, she argues that, no matter how good its practices are on the ground, if they do not fit into the framework of the programme, they remain at the community level and do not become a part of the organisation's programme design. In such cases, she argues that these good practices simply end up being fancy statements of engaging indigenous perspectives and processes in DRR. However, from the narratives of organisation participants, these challenges come alongside the realisations of possibilities in terms of institutional response and approaches to disasters. Part two of this chapter further illustrates this as it tackles some of the normative institutional responses and approaches to DRR.

6.3   Part Two: Institutional responses to disasters: Privileging a top-down DRR approach?

Government programmes and services for DRR are often based upon laws and policies that emanate from the top. Local government officials argue against this statement saying they can formulate laws for DRR programme implementation. However, they also acknowledge that the local legislations they formulate are always in support of national or international laws and frameworks. Additionally, for NGOs, interviews with their staff members proved that their founding philosophies –vision, mission, goals and objectives – were the main foundations for their programmes and services.

Besides laws and founding philosophies being the basis for institutional responses to disasters, programme designs and guidelines such as DRR also play a vital role in their approaches to development, especially for NGOs (Ebrahim, 2003). For government agencies, a participant from the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) said that these

programme designs are frameworks that are usually downloaded from the national level to local implementing offices (i.e., regional, provincial, municipality, barangay) to follow. For NGOs, accountability to donor agencies is also a determinant in the conceptualisation of their disaster management programmes (Luna, 2002).

This section discusses how these parameters have influenced what Gaillard and Mercer (2013) maintain are top-down DRR frameworks that "emphasize scientific knowledge and national government intervention" (p. 94). It presents how government programmes on DRR are largely framed after this top-down approach. In comparison, DRR programmes of NGOs are also shaped by their philosophical and ethical foundations which, in some ways, always present a top-down model. However, narratives of interview participants also provided that these NGO DRR programmes could be flexible in adapting to community needs and situations.

From my conversations with participants from government agencies, I found out that there were a number of small opportunities that could be maximised in order to support local DRR needs, efforts and initiatives. However, these programmes and services have been neglected in favour of technocratic and normative responses to disasters that a top-down approach offers. Participants from the municipal local government of Kibungan acknowledged the need to go beyond what laws provide to respond to people's needs for DRR. But they also raised the need for external support to realise these. A discussion on the application of the Free Prior and Informed Consent of the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (FPIC) for bilateral and foreign donor support for DRR programmes and projects in indigenous communities are detailed in the subsequent section in this chapter, where participants talk about external support. The provisions of this FPIC heightens the debates on how disasters can be used to perpetuate a colonising agenda amongst indigenous peoples.

6.3.1 The founding philosophies of NGOs, accountability to donors and community needs for DRR: Negotiating potential conflicts

Ebrahim (2003, pp. 819-822) states that NGOs, particularly in the Global South, are more focused on satisfying donor requirements than in developing "self-regulation" Local NGOs,

such as those involved in this research, disagreed with this statement as they asserted that they were driven by their visions and missions, which are primarily based on the issues and needs of the people they serve. In the case of the Catholic Relief Services, an international NGO based in Manila, the staff interviewed also mentioned how their vision and mission was one of the anchors for their programming. In line with this commitment to organisational vision and mission, she adds that, although the Catholic Relief Services always respects and recognises local perspectives and situations in terms of disaster response and management, it cannot always positively respond to requests coming from the ground. She justifies this by saying:

> "*We have our own vision and goals as an organisation. These are the very reasons for the existence and these cannot be compromised to accommodate issues or requests from the ground that are not in line with these.*" (Participant 19)

When asked about what they normally do when their DRR programme designs do not fit with the issues and needs of local communities, she revealed: "*we have a predefined criteria for the selection of our partner communities, including implementing local organisations.*" These criteria, she says, need to be met from the very beginning. Therefore, she argues that, if there is a mismatch between the issues and needs of the people and the founding principles of the organisation, they should not be there in the first place. She adds that Catholic Relief Services continue to learn from their experiences in different countries and they develop their programmes and services from these. She believes that this can facilitate appropriate and relevant DRR programmes for people in different contexts. She added that Catholic Relief Services worked with the Diocese of Baguio for a rehabilitation project after the 1990 earthquake.

Local NGO participants assert the ethical foundations of their organisations as the driving force for what they call their "mission." Yet, they also acknowledge that they have their own criteria for selection of what they referred to as "project areas." According to them, these project areas are described in detail in the project proposals and approved by the funding agencies. Although in the case of one of the NGOs in the Cordilleras, a former officer of the network of NGOs there said that one of its members was able to expand its project area in the middle of

project implementation. This was to respond to an issue brought to them by local leaders and this was approved by the donor agency. He mentioned this story as a means of offering possibilities to NGOs for doing something flexible to incorporate the emerging needs and situations from the communities that they serve.

He added that for well-meaning NGOs, their founding principles emerge from the struggles and needs of people on the ground. However, he also acknowledged that there are also NGOs whose visions and mission statements are simply designed to fit the trends of funding agencies. According to him, one of the reasons these NGOs go through internal organisational development workshops, programme reviews and evaluation activities is to make sure that their existence is aligned with what donor agencies are looking for. In this case, he boldly says that the DRR-centred visions and missions in NGOs are not necessarily an assurance for grounded responses as they may still bear the top-down framework of development in general.

Most participants from the NGOs highlighted in their interviews that they were more flexible than government institutions in terms of adjusting and adapting their development programmes in DRR to community needs. Contrary to the claims that some NGOs use periodic programme reviews and assessments to fit their organisational philosophies to those of funding agencies, they argued that these activities have led to instances by which they had to do some sort of "reprogramming" and "refocusing" to fit into the evolving issues of indigenous peoples on the ground. For instance, one of these participants talked about how they were able to seek approval for additional funding from their foreign funding agency for the incorporation of a natural resources inventory and valuation activities as a part a DRR project that was already being implemented. According to her, this activity required a significant increase in funding since they had to pay external consultants for the natural resource valuation activities. Experiences like these affirm the flexibility of NGOs in terms of running their development programmes. However, the staff of this local NGO added that the changes in programme design had to be approved by the donor agency and the process was a long and tedious one.

This dependency of NGOs in the Philippines on external funding and how donors shape their programmes (including those for DRR) are discussed in Luna (2002). Here, he mentions

instances when the agendas of the NGO and the funding agency come into conflict with one another. He argues that NGOs may either reject the funding, or as Edwards and Hulme (1996) maintain, or compromise their ideologies and become a conduit of the funding agency's objectives and purposes. Garilao (1987) expresses a similar perspective stating that beyond the issues of dependency, NGOs in less wealthy countries often become instruments of their donor agencies in attaining their agendas on the ground. He emphasises that most of the donor agencies in less wealthy countries come from more affluent regions of the world.

In relation to this, it is important to understand the diverse backgrounds and nature of NGOs involved in DRR projects in the Philippines. This was gleaned from the sharing of the stakeholders interviewed from NGOs themselves. One of the officers of the Philippine Misereor Partnerships (PMP) mentioned that most of the NGOs they worked with were issue-based. This means that they were organised or developed in response to issues such as development aggression, wars and conflicts, and disasters. The PMP is a national network of all NGOs and peoples' organisations supported by Misereor, an international development organisation. The officer also shared an interesting story about how a people's organisation in a certain village was transformed into an NGO with the help of the network. For her, this was an expression of empowerment of the people amidst their struggles for peace and social justice. "*This is now their way of making their voices heard and their presence felt in their continuing advocacy for peace and social justice*," she said. But as participants from the local NGOs acknowledged, there were also NGOs that operate like corporations without basing their programmes and services on the issues of people and communities on the ground. They also mentioned the phenomenon of "fly-by-night" NGOs that suddenly emerge overnight and start accessing (government) funds to implement projects that are sometimes non-existent. "*These are the NGOs that are motivated by self-interests and take advantage of the miseries of others to attain these*," one of the participants said.

Going back to the discussions about a potential conflict of interest between funding agencies and NGOs, another participant shared how a corporation approached their organisation to support their programmes, including their work in DRR. They turned down the offer because

of a conflict of interests. He added that early in their dialogue with the corporation, they were basically dictating and controlling the kinds of projects and activities they wanted to be funded. "*We felt that they we were being poised simply as implementers of the funding agency's projects and objectives*," he said. What was interesting in his story was his claim that this same project was offered to another NGO that eventually implemented it.

Addressing the issues of having NGOs fall into the traps of donor agencies and corporations, an officer of Cordnet (a coalition of development focused non-profit organisations and peoples' organisations in the Cordillera region) stressed the importance of building and strengthening networks to support smaller NGOs and limit their over-dependence on donor-driven programmes. She pointed out that members of the coalition may have different ideologies in working with indigenous peoples for development, but looking after the self-sustainability of these NGOs is a potential means of leveraging the power off funding agencies and corporations to dictate what they want and how they want to achieve them. This includes DRR programmes and projects for indigenous peoples' communities. She said this in the context of what an officer from another network said about how the power of funding agencies is not affected when one or two organisations turn them down because there will always be takers of the grants that are turned down.

6.3.2 Legal framework for government perspectives and programmes on DRR

Moving on with the foundations of government programmes on DRR, participants from different government agencies strongly argued that they recognised and respected all forms of conceptualisations about disasters and tried to incorporate these in their work on a personal level. However, in their responses about how they themselves conceptualise disasters, all of them made reference to the definition set by RA 10121 or the Philippine Disaster Management Act of 2010. Restating the UNISDR definition of disasters, RA10121 states that disasters are "the serious disruption of the functioning of society causing widespread human, material or environmental losses, which exceed the ability of the affected communities to cope using their own resources (Congress of the Philippines, 2010, p.5). This law provides

a framework for government agencies to carry out activities in terms of the priority areas of disaster risk reduction and management. One of the participants referred to the Philippine Disaster Management Act as the Bible for government definitions and responses to disasters. A participant from the Office of Civil Defence added that there were various government pronouncements and memos that serve as frameworks for institutional responses to disasters.

While participants from the organisations generally acknowledged that there are different forms of conceptualising disasters, their responses centred mostly upon disasters as being natural hazards. This could be gleaned from the narratives of participants from government agencies who work in disaster management who still refer to disasters as natural disasters. This resonates also with how the students and young professionals also constantly referred to natural disasters in their discussions in Chapter Four. But the traditional elders strongly debated these terms by saying that they have existed in harmony with nature since the beginning and it is the everyday manifestations of oppressions that have caused disasters, not the processes of nature.

From the NCIP, the participant said that, in the absence of an organisational statement about disasters, she wanted to make clear that her opinions about them did not reflect those of her organisation. She acknowledged that people may conceptualise disasters in different ways depending on how they have experienced them. According to her, she had not yet heard of any indigenous people's definitions of disasters. However, like the rest of the government participants, she asserted that an understanding of disasters had to be based on what the law provides. In a consultation with the council of elders of the Indigenous Peoples' Organisations that included a presentation of the initial findings of the research, the provincial director of NCIP encouraged the *Kankanaey* people to strengthen and utilise their indigenous knowledge and approaches to disasters. He said that this was one way of promoting their perspectives and having them recognised by government and other formal institutions. When he was asked what the NCIP could do to institutionalise indigenous people's perspectives and responses to disasters, his response was for the people and their local governments to refer to RA 8371 (Indigenous People Rights Act) and make sure that they utilised their Ancestral Domain and Sustainable Development and Management Plans as a development tool. This document

incorporates the indigenous *Kankanaey* people's knowledge systems and practices, including those in DRR.

Another legal framework for DRR in the Philippines is the Joint Memorandum Circular of the National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC), Department of Budget and the Department of the Interior and Local Government Unit of 2013 (Joint Memorandum Circular 2013-1). According to a participant from the DILG, this memorandum circular spells out the utilisation of local DRR funds. In line with this joint memo, there is a recognition amongst government participants that indigenous knowledge and practices have to be recognised as a framework for DRR with indigenous peoples. However, when asked to comment on the extent that government supports indigenous knowledge, processes and practices in DRR, they referred to the guidelines of this Joint Memorandum Circular. This Joint Mem spells out the specific programmes and activities that can be carried out for each of the four priority areas that did not mention indigenous knowledge (see DBM, 2015). Other legal frameworks of DRR that the participant from DILG mentioned were local legislation and guidelines formulated by local governments that support national laws and pronouncements. This is reminiscent of the assertion of local municipal officials in Kibungan that they can also formulate laws and guidelines that make government DRR programmes and services culturally appropriate. However, these assertions do not happen in reality as reflected in current local laws and local government programs on DRR.

6.3.3 Beyond normative responses to disasters and the roles of the local government

Laws provide specific activities for institutional responses to DRR. For instance, the Joint Memo provides a detailed list of allowable activities under disaster prevention and mitigation. Examples of these activities are risk assessments, vulnerability assessments, capacity building, and many more. Two participants from government agencies, who are both health professionals, said that there were other important prevention and mitigation projects and activities beyond what is defined by law that may be more relevant to some people or communities, but are apparently not being given much attention by government agencies concerned with disasters.

For instance, they both echo that people and communities' access to clean water, sanitation and hygiene (or WASH), is an important component of all phases of disaster management (Landesman, 2005). One of them said that water-borne diseases affecting mostly children and elderly in indigenous communities in the region could become even more problematic during and after disasters. She added that WASH therefore needed to be embedded in the daily routines and processes of indigenous peoples and communities. As a health professional, she said that WASH was not only important as a preventive health measure and mitigation in DRR, but also crucial during emergency and post-disaster situations. The other participant raises a critical point by saying that post-disaster associated diseases could be prevented by improving WASH initiatives in every indigenous community. However, he also said that it remains a neglected area of DRR work in the indigenous communities he has been to. He argues:

> "*Instead of coming in as heroes and saviours into the indigenous community after a disaster strikes to treat the people from hygiene and water-borne diseases, why can't we just focus on providing communities with the access to clean water and good hygiene that build their resilience to disaster-related diseases?*" (Participant 16)

A participant from the Department of Health (DoH) also pointed out the need to look into the health and wellbeing of indigenous peoples. Health and wellbeing is defined beyond the absence of diseases but embodies physical, mental, emotional and spiritual wellness (Beddoe & Maidment, 2013). This participant raised two important points in terms of indigenous health and wellbeing. First, she said that a healthy person supports a healthy community and a healthy community is more resilient to disasters. She was concerned with the increasing mortality and morbidity rates related to cardiovascular diseases amongst indigenous peoples in the region. She said that these were closely related to lifestyle. Secondly, she mentioned the distressing fact that suicide rates have significantly increased amongst indigenous peoples, specifically in the Province of Benguet, over the last few years. A study correlates this to peoples' easy access to commercial pesticides used in agriculture as one of the reasons for this phenomenon (Laking, 2013).

According to this participant from the DoH, while there are positive impacts that modernisation has brought into indigenous communities, these have also impacted upon the health and wellbeing of the people. She adds to her observation that most indigenous peoples, especially the young, are eating from fast food restaurants such as Jollibee, McDonalds and KFC. She adds that these young people have become addicted to these sorts of junk foods. More indigenous peoples are therefore getting obese, which is a risk factor for many diseases such as cardiovascular and pulmonary diseases (see DOH-CAR, 2015). Ritzer (1993), in his book The McDonaldisation of Society, raises important factors that need to be considered here and how these fast food chains and junk foods are widely promoted, often with cheaper prices than most local food and restaurants. To him, this aligns with the hegemonic agenda of globalisation, which is a necessary dimension of capitalism as a system.

Bankoff (2001) offers an excellent explanation between the connection of diseases and disasters and how the West has appropriated these as attributes of non-Western countries. This has resulted in the popularisation of terms such as "tropical diseases" and "geographically vulnerable" countries. Interestingly, as the West sees other countries laden with diseases and geographically vulnerable to disasters, they suggest that Western scientific responses are the only means of combatting these (Hewitt, 1995). As the participant from DoH believes, the introduction of a Western lifestyle is the major cause of diseases amongst indigenous peoples in the Cordillera region. To her, the health conditions of people significantly impacts on their capacity to respond to disasters. Therefore, she believes that, while it is the responsibility of health professionals to raise people's awareness on health issues, public health must become a concern of everyone and needs to be embedded in government DRR planning. She believes that the government should consider community health and wellbeing not only as an area of expenditure for DRR, but more as an investment for building a disaster-resilient community. Here, she emphasised the need to "go back to the basics." She claimed that there are indigenous practices that have sustained indigenous peoples' health and wellbeing in the past and these could be considered extensively in preventive health and DRR management.

When talking about this, our conversation shifted to the use of herbs in traditional healing

practices. She alluded to how people's past resilience to disasters in her province was partly because of their use of traditional herbs and health practices. However, she lamented that the traditional medicines and even the traditional healers were gone because people have since preferred Western scientific health practices over these (Castro-Palaganas, 2001). A more focused discussion on the binaries between indigenous and scientific knowledge is presented in Chapter Eight of this thesis. Castro-Palaganas (2001) claim that in places where medicinal herbs still exist, the younger generation do not know how to identify and use these because they are either not taught about them or they are not interested in learning about them. Being with the DoH, she made clear that she did not discount the importance of scientific health practices and medicines because they have definitely been very important. However, she points out that indigenous peoples and their communities have numerous medicinal plants, health practices and healers that can also support and strengthen community-based DRR for the people, by the people. She said that the DoH has existing programmes promoting these; however, she claimed that they were often neglected in the area of DRR in favour of the fancier DRR projects and activities explicitly defined by the law.

In both the cases of WASH and health and wellbeing, health professional participants highlighted the need for local government units to take the lead in supporting and maximising programmes and services that could further strengthen indigenous peoples' resilience to disasters other than those already being practised and supported by the government. They argued that rather than simply relying on what the law defined for them, it was their responsibility to explore more ways of facilitating holistic disaster response. Furthermore, they challenged local governments to influence DRR policies and programmes through local legislation that was more reflective of indigenous peoples' situations. They believed that doing this challenged the normative institutional responses to disasters. The 1991 Local Government Code of the Philippines highlights the frontline role of local governments in DRR (DILG, 2016). A participant from the DILG supported this claim by saying that the devolution of most of the government programmes and services to the local government provided them with the power to govern their constituents more effective ways. Given this power, she asserted that local governments, through local legislation, could lobby for the interests of their constituents and

challenge existing government DRR programmes that had been formulated from the top-down and may not be suitable to indigenous peoples' contexts. She challenged local officials with this statement:

> "*It does not mean to say that when you are in the same place and that you have been governing the same people for a long time that you assume you already know what their DRR needs and issues are.*" (Participant 35)

She explained her statement by saying that being consultative is what makes local governance strategies unique. To her, the process of consultation goes beyond the number of people who gather for a meeting. Rather, this concept of a consultative process has to be translated to suit all development activities, and be facilitated among indigenous constituents. This resonates in Marlowe (2014, p. 57), where he states that disaster responses have to be "*collaborative, empowering and informed by social justice.*"

Statements from mining company representatives at a regional mining forum on July 14, 2016, affirm the notion that local governments have the power to influence and shape the kind of DRR they desire for their communities. They shared that various community projects aimed at increasing the host local communities' resilience to disasters have been implemented in partnerships with local government units who would normally seek their assistance to support particular DRR activities. Additionally, they mentioned that, while their roles were part of their ethical (corporate and social) responsibilities to their host communities, the local governments have a strong influence on how these are formulated and implemented.

6.3.4 External support to government programmes on DRR and the Free Prior and Informed Consent

Participants from local government acknowledged the diverse needs and responses to disasters. Central to the conversations with them were the resources needed to run all of the programmes that indigenous peoples need. One of them raised what she claimed as the reality

of limited resources to respond to everything people raise as a need or an issue. She said that everyone has special needs and local governments do not have the capacity to do respond to everything. In response to this, she asserted that external support was needed to realise all these needs. She cited the case of the multi-funded World Food Programme and USAID disaster resilience project in the municipality of Kibungan and other towns in Benguet, which she claimed to have brought in significant development in terms of early warning systems, risk assessment activities and construction of infrastructure. She argued that a similar external project that is as holistic as this one would make an impact to the community's DRR and would respond more fully to local their needs and issues.

Figure 6.1: Kibungan municipal 3D map: one of the WFP-WB-USAID supported projects (Photo courtesy: Mayor's Office, Kibungan, Benguet, 20 November 2014).

In relation to external support for DRR, a local official from Palina asked about the application of the Free Prior and Informed Consent to bilateral and foreign multi-donor projects during a community consultation meeting with an NCIP official. My research was subjected to NCIP's administrative order for the conduct of research amongst indigenous peoples, which was reflective of the provisions of the Free Prior and Informed Consent procedure. An approval

to conduct it amongst the indigenous *Kankanaey* people had to be sought from the Commission. The NCIP official was asked how they would treat DRR projects coming into indigenous communities such as the one with the World Food programme. I gathered from the response that bilateral projects have their own processes and guidelines and there are sets of consultations with the Philippine government as well as local government units and other stakeholders before these are approved and implemented. In this case, and as Feiring (2013) states about international frameworks and indigenous peoples' rights within REDD+ processes, it is the duty of the state to consult and cooperate with indigenous peoples in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent.

Picking up from previous discussions, I asked how the FPIC applied to external actors coming into indigenous communities as disaster responders. The response was that in the case of disaster, the FPIC did not apply. In this case, the NCIP expects that local governments would be responsible for ensuring that these external organisations and their activities would not be oppressive to indigenous peoples in the community. In a separate interview with a participant from the Office of Civil Defence, she said that the law (RA10121) provides for when external actors and interventions are needed during emergencies – that this is only when internal capacities alone are not enough to manage the situation. Echoing what the NCIP official said, this participant also raised the need for local government units to be critical in terms of responding to external support. She revealed that external organisations often consult directly with the local governments. As such, she encouraged local governments to be more accountable to their constituents for any DRR programmes or activities that they allow for in their jurisdictions.

In the case of World Food Programme and USAID DRR project in the province, a municipal official in Kibungan said that they had launching activities where indigenous peoples were oriented about the project and that they were given the chance to raise any issues and concerns they may have had. The participant from the Office of Civil Defence added that the Regional Development Council, where the National Economic Development Authority sits as the chair, sponsors periodic donor meetings where bottom-up knowledge sharing takes place.

She said that these donor meetings could be an opportunity for local government units to be the voice of their constituents in terms of raising indigenous peoples' issues and concerns that may emerge during the process of project implementation. She added that these meetings can also be a venue to share knowledge and experiences that may eventually be adopted as mechanisms in DRR planning by government agencies and donor institutions alongside those already in place.

6.4   Conclusion

This chapter illustrates that indigenous professionals who work with institutions that respond to disasters, and also those who are supportive of their advocacy, recognise indigenous knowledge and processes in their work. This cultural foundation of their work has allowed them to go beyond their job descriptions in ensuring that indigenous communities are considered in effective and relevant institutional approaches for DRR. Some of them have successfully integrated these indigenous perspectives and responses to disasters in their work at a personal level but this effort continues to be outside of their organisational mandates. In both cases, they believe that, while there are a number of organisational barriers preventing institutional support to their advocacy, continuing to raise indigenous concerns and issues have paved the way for the possibility of integrating indigenous ethics, knowledge and approaches to the pre-defined organisational roles and functions of DRR.

However, these cultural underpinnings that individual professionals bring to their institutions are often overshadowed by the institutionally mandated responses and approaches. These include organisational philosophies and programme frameworks, laws and policies, as well as accountabilities to donors, especially for those NGOs who are more concerned about pleasing their funding agencies than the welfare of the people they serve. All these frameworks for institutional responses to disasters privilege a top-down approach to DRR and sometimes deny organisations from exploring other disaster responses that may be deemed more meaningful and relevant in certain contexts. As participants from the NGOs acknowledged, laws and policies that govern institutional approaches to disasters are limiting. This statement is supported by the narratives I gathered from the interviews with some participants from

the government agencies that suggested that the controlling nature of these laws has in fact pushed them back into normative responses, which ultimately privilege the provision of external support, including development aggression, to indigenous peoples and their communities. It is therefore essential that local government units remain critical and just, as they are the closest entity to indigenous peoples and their communities. Ensuring this justice will serve as leverage in facilitating a holistic, empowering and meaningful development while at the same time safeguarding the interests of the indigenous peoples it has sworn to serve throughout its existence. Even more so, local governments are encouraged to use their power in institutionalising a DRR approach that is reflective of indigenous peoples' realities. Doing so addresses the injustices that are inherent in development theories and practice.

Chapter 7

Development injustices and community development as a new possibility: DRR's implications for indigenous peoples

7.1 Introduction

The previous three chapters have illustrated how disasters are conceptualised based upon peoples' backgrounds and everyday experiences. However, these conceptualisations of disasters are not reflected in the seemingly normative DRR responses and approaches of government and nongovernment organisations that are primarily based on top-down mandates and frameworks. Such is the case of the indigenous *Kankanaey* peoples, who themselves, have different ways of conceptualising disasters. Yet, these realities have been neglected time and time again by government, nongovernment organisations, and corporations working with indigenous peoples for development. Empirical findings of this research illustrate that these institutions working with *Kankanaey* communities almost always adhere to "universal" standards and organisation mandates in terms of planning, budgeting and delivery of DRR programmes and activities. These universal standards are often based on the Western agenda of development (Amin, 2003; Rodney, 1975).

As expressed particularly in the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010, and affirmed by organisation participants, local DRR mandates have to be aligned with international frameworks and instruments. Whilst these international instruments, such as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, refer to indigenous peoples, these are often done so in a tokenistic fashion. Unfortunately, the technocratic nature of these international frameworks may diminish local and indigenous peoples' agency and capacities to drive their own DRR and therefore enforce hidden agendas behind these approaches (Zia and Wagner, 2015).

In this chapter, I theorise the *Kankanaey* people's experiences with development and DRR using various literature sources. Drawing on Blaut's (1993) "eurocentric diffusionism," the first section discusses Western development as the new form of conquest. I relate this orientation to *Kankanaey* people's experiences with mining, which has created inequalities and environmental and social risks that represent a major threat to their livelihoods and relationships. The first part of the chapter acknowledges that community development can be used to attain hidden agendas of corporations and other external organisations camouflaged as a form of development. Therefore, it incorporates a discussion on how understanding these issues of injustice in development are important in the practice of community development with indigenous peoples, focusing on DRR. This then builds an argument towards community development as a new possibility for a meaningful DRR with indigenous peoples.

From the discussion on the potential of community development to offer new possibilities, the second section critiques alternative development in the context of DRR. It argues how these notions of alternative development, such as sustainable development, corporate social responsibility and sustainable and/or responsible mining can simply be a repackaging of Western development to push for the same oppressive and colonising agenda. Acknowledging that community development is also presented as an alternative which can be used for the same oppressive purpose, this section highlights that it needs to situate this within its liberating agenda to respond to issues of oppression and injustices (Mayo, 1975).

Given the issues raised in parts one and two, which construct the background to argue

for a genuine community development, part three structures a response to these issues by using Smith's (2012) Twenty-Five Indigenous Project framework. This attempts to present an indigenous framework for development by which community development can build upon in its practice for DRR with indigenous peoples.

7.2 Part one: Western development as conquest

In his critique of eurocentrism, Blaut (1993) argues that its proponents believe in a world that is divided as the inside/outside or the centre/periphery. He explains that the inside, or the centre, is necessarily Europe, while the outside or the peripheries are other nations that are far from the European model of success and development. Europe, thus being the centre of civilisation and development, has a hegemonic obligation to diffuse its culture into the peripheries to "civilise" and modernise them. He refers to this process as "eurocentric diffusionism." According to him (1993, pp. 10-11), this is a "super theory" that has become the foundation of all other theories such as psychology, geography, and development. Other critics of eurocentrism, such as Said (1978) and Escobar (2004), also underscore that the colonisation of territories has also meant the colonisation of the mind or of knowledge. This necessarily places Western knowledge and theories as being more superior than other forms of knowing and therefore need to be "diffused" into other nations. Said (1978) argues that Western knowledge and theories then serve the political and hegemonic agenda of the West. This concept of diffussionism also translates into DRR theories and practice. Scholars have criticised the often technocratic DRR approaches (for example, see Gaillard & Mercer, 2013; Wisner, 2003a, 2003b, 2004), that mirror institutional policies and programmes and tend to diffuse from the top to small indigenous villages such as in the case of *Kankanaey* people.

Barangay local government units in the Philippines are required by law to come up with their annual Barangay Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plans using preformatted templates. These templates often appear different and in conflict with those by the Department of the Interior, Local Government and the National Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council. The templates of the NGOs are also different from these again. Some NGOs use

templates prescribed by their donors while others develop their own. One of the downsides of enforcing predesigned templates to people participating in the planning process is that it delimits them to critically reflect on their issues and reflect these in the planning process. This practice marginalises indigenous peoples' knowledge and capacities in development processes, such as in DRR (see Mercer, Gaillard, Crowley, Shannon, Alexander, Day, & Becker, 2012), while reinforcing what Hewitt (1983) states as the supremacy of scientific approaches to disasters. In effect, this top-down DRR approach facilitates the accomplishment of Rodney's (1975) arguments on the colonising agenda of Western development.

Ironically, as the dominant view associates Western development with civilisation, modernisation and progress, this has been criticised in its role for the poverty of other nations (Amin, 2003). As the *Kankanaey* elders talked about the economic development of their communities in relation to mining, they asserted that only a few benefited from this. They were quick to add that this did not respond to the common good, which was how they conceptualised development activities overall. The same perspective was reflected in the narratives of various indigenous peoples in mining communities in the province of Benguet who articulated that they were not happy despite the material possessions they generated from mining if this meant the poverty of others (Broad & Cavanagh, 2009; Holden & Jacobson, 2012). One of the *Kankanaey* community leaders adds that, after the mining company had plundered their resources, they were left impoverished and to recover on their own. Land, as the basis of indigenous peoples' wealth and wellbeing, offers a critical discourse in development (Greenwood & de Leeuw, 2007), especially as the national government sees mining as one of the vital mechanisms in achieving its agenda for the economic development of the country as expressed in the Philippine Mining Act of 1995.

This national economic development effort is aligned with what Amin (1985) calls the "global capitalist agenda," which is intertwined with Rodney's (1975) discourses on the emergence and practice of Western development. In relation to DRR, Wisner (2003b) argues that the introduction of capitalist modes of production has made producers more vulnerable to hazards. This manifests in the stories of the *Kankanaey* farmers who, themselves, acknowledge

that they are often cash-strapped with most of their profits earmarked for the repayment of farm inputs (including interest) provided by the suppliers and/or middlemen. Because of this, it becomes a challenge for them to provide for their families. For instance, a group of farmers revealed putting their basic needs on hold in favour of paying off the accumulating interests of farm inputs from their suppliers. This occurs alongside the conversion, by big business interests, of forest lands into prime agricultural lands in the villages. This example underscores what Wisner (2003b) calls the injustices in the capitalist sector which increase disaster risks especially among the producer sector. However, this reality remains unacknowledged in development processes such as in government and NGO DRR policies and programmes. The following sub-section illustrates how Western development creates hazards in indigenous villages. It discusses how development projects and activities have affected the relationships and solidarity of indigenous peoples, which are the foundations of their collective resilience to hazards as a people (Dekens, 2007b). The stories of *Kankanaey* people support this claim and provide insights to community development practice with indigenous peoples, focusing on DRR.

7.2.1 "Broken rainbow:" disaster risks and social costs of development

Broken Rainbow is an award-winning documentary that narrates the displacement of the Navajo Tribe by the Black Mesa project in Arizona which, according to one of the film reviews, is a classic example of greed and betrayal (broken rainbow) inflicted upon these indigenous peoples (Mudd, 1985). *Kankanaey* elders say that rainbows can be ominous but are also symbolic of promise and hope. Sometimes, rainbows are well-defined and sometimes they are broken. An elder says a broken rainbow symbolises unfulfilled promises and it is often used to refer to betrayal by someone. This symbolism draws parallels between the *Kankanaey* people's experiences and those of the Navajos in the documentary. Using both environmental (Holden & Jacobson, 2012) and social (Tierney, 2014) lenses in understanding disaster risks emanating from "mega projects" (Wisner, 2017) such as mining, the injustices and inequalities that are inherent in these, are analysed in terms of how these affect the relationships and solidarity of indigenous peoples. Indigenous peoples' relationships and solidarity are the foundations for

their resilience to hazards and survival. This is not a criticism of community development. Rather, it raises a critical awareness that even well-meaning projects and activities can have negative impacts on indigenous peoples and their communities when these ways of life are not carefully reflected upon.

Contrary to the claims of prosperity to host communities that mining brings, Holden and Jacobson (2012) argue that the activities related to these projects cause a number of environmental risks. They provide examples that were no different from the stories that mining-affected *Kankanaey* shared in their interviews. These include, among others, the loosening of soil from open pit and other mining activities, making the ground prone to landslides and sinking. An elder notes that this had all already happened in their village, which had previously been mined and was now abandoned, awaiting rehabilitation. Community people also identified the siltation of their farms and contamination of their water sources and pasture lands with harmful chemicals that pose risks to their health, including the health of their grazing animals. Moreover, they explained that their sources of water have dried up, making it impossible to cultivate large portions of their farms during the dry season. These insights about how development was conceptualised by corporations needs to be carefully reflected upon in the practice of community development amongst indigenous peoples. What is defined by corporations to benefit indigenous peoples' development may, in fact, cause them more misery in life, such as in the case of the *Kankanaey* experiences with mining. As Mowbray (2011) argues, community development must therefore be used critically in both theory and practice as, if it is not, it can be used against its own liberating purpose. In the case of the examples provided earlier, what corporations conceived as a form of development actually presented as a form of disaster risk for indigenous peoples.

Holden and Jacobson (2012) state that "the government and the mining industry are not oblivious to the risks presented by the intersection of mining and natural hazards" (p. 130). This is echoed in the narratives of the *Kankanaey* people who acknowledged a show of concern from government officials on the environmental effects of mining to their communities. However, as Holden and Jacobson argue, both the government and the mining industry believe that these

risks are capable of being overcome by the use of technocratic responses and the environmental effects of mining are more than capable of being managed." However, the experiences of *Kankanaey* people say otherwise. As one of the community leaders adds, the social costs of mining amongst affected indigenous communities are far more than whatever benefits this brings to a few. Wisner (1988) maintains that, contrary to the assumptions of modernisation theory that development benefits all, people have different concepts of development. He argues that people need to be given the opportunity to define development on their own terms and their definitions need to be negotiated in development processes. Community leaders in one of the villages say that the social effects of mining need to be taken more seriously by both government and corporations when facilitating development projects in indigenous communities. This also resonates with community development, where practitioners need to be grounded in local people's definitions of development and how they envision attaining this. This is to make sure that the practice of community development is not be used as a tool to reinforce development projects and activities that make indigenous communities more vulnerable to disasters.

Tierney (2014) states that the social roots of risk can be understood in terms of how structures and institutions are so revolved around economic development that they tend to ignore any other means of mitigating risk. In relation to mining, Holden and Jacobson (2012) argue that policies governing operations and sanctions for violations tend to be more relaxed in other countries (such as the Philippines), than those countries where the mining companies originate. They argue that this perceived relaxation in laws governing mining operations by these governments offer more possibility for disaster risk into the future. Considering this, practices of community development that are aimed at empowering communities must endeavour to keep indigenous peoples informed, vigilant and proactive about issues where the laws cannot be relied upon to protect them from disaster risks emanating from corporate activities such as mining (Mayo, 1975).

In addition to this, *Kankanaey* leaders assert that their indigenous knowledge systems and practices in mitigating risks have been disregarded as unscientific in mining exploration and operation activities. Malanes (2002) points out that indigenous mining practices are

environmentally friendly and incorporate rituals that seek permission to the spirits guarding these natural resources to take what they need. He argues that this is one way of being true to the *Kankanaey* practice of taking only what one needs (sustainability of resources), which can be pleasing to the spirits who would then ensure the safety of the "miners." However, with the introduction of the Western concept of development, these indigenous practices that have governed the sustainable management of resources have been sidelined and disregarded (Menzies, 2006). This now dominant perspective further presents itself in DRR, where indigenous knowledge is often disenfranchised in favour of scientific knowledge and approaches (Mercer et al., 2012; Wisner, 2004).

Hewitt (1983) argues that risks emerge from the daily activities of humans. Wisner (2017) refers to the activities of corporations as among the daily processes that create risks for others. These arguments point back to Tierney (2014), who underscores that these daily activities are only made possible by structures such as laws and the institutions that allow these. In effect, these not only result in environmental risks but also in social and cultural issues as the community leaders mentioned earlier. This is illustrated in the case of the shortage of water, which community people believed to be the effect of open-pit mining operations. Mirza and Mustafa (2016, pp. 143-145) posit that, besides the "health and livelihood" value of water, other dimensions crucial in the social and spiritual relationships of people had been overlooked in development planning and processes. *Kankanaey* elders illustrate this by saying that water plays a significant role in sustaining the relationships of peoples in the villages. They expressed how many of their indigenous communal bonds, such as doing laundry along riverbanks for the women and collective traditional farming practices for the farmers, have water at their centre. However, with water becoming scarce as a result of mining and the conversion of forest lands to agricultural, business and residential areas (for more examples of this see Broad & Cavanagh, 1994, 2009), they claim that these bonding activities are being taken for granted with most people doing these activities personally rather than collectively. These changes in relationships for indigenous peoples are an important consideration in community development processes such as DRR, as the activities involved in them often build from the relationships and solidarity of people in the villages. This points back to the argument that community development projects

need to allow for people to define their own version of development and help them attain this in ways that are relevant and meaningful to them.

Amin (2003, p. 6) argues that the capitalist mode of production changed "community solidarities for class consciousness." This is reflected in contemporary *Kankanaey* farming practices. One of the village chiefs said that the economic status of people can be immediately noticed with their capacity to install water pumps to siphon water from the sources directly into their homes or farms. This deviates from the traditional natural resource management practices of ensuring that everyone else's field or farm is irrigated by using a temporary conveyance that makes sure water is shared by everyone (Prill-Brett, 1994). Moreover, it poses the question on how access and control of resources (premised on economic capacity) exposes the less economically well-off villagers to hazards. Community development projects that promote this capitalist mode of production therefore have to be carefully considered in working with indigenous peoples as they may in fact harbour hazards that challenge their overall survival as a people.

What this village chief shared resonates with Mirza and Mustafa (2016), who argue that alongside the commodification of water is an effect on the relationships of people. This reality is reflected in one of the research villages, where farmers said that with the scarcity of water, those who could afford to buy water pumps were the ones able to have a water supply to irrigate their farms during the dry season. In order to sustain access to these water supplies, villagers competed with one another to the extent of putting constraints on their social relationships. Another village chief in one of the research sites noted that conflicts arising from community members are due to issues about ownership and access to water for irrigation. This warrants some reflection in development policies and projects, particularly in relation to DRR and the fact that community resilience to hazards and the mitigation of disaster risks are based primarily on sustaining practices and relationships. Any force that breaks this bond threatens their hope for survival as a people – a broken rainbow that lies ahead of the indigenous peoples' generations.

Community development theories and practice need to be grounded upon these understandings of how development projects and corporate activities in indigenous villages can

Figure 7.1: Bagan: indigenous *Kankanaey* conveyance that ensures water flow is distributed to irrigate neighbouring fields (Photo by Charleston Pasigon, 15 June 2016, Kibungan, Benguet, Philippines).

have both social and environmental impact. These both affect indigenous peoples' resilience to hazards. The elders emphasised in their stories that relationships and solidarity are what matters to them as a people. It matters to their collective resilience to disaster. It matters to their DRR responses. It matters to their survival as a people in general. Unfortunately, the current practice of development is based on Western concepts of modernisation and progress that disregard relationships in favour of economic development (see Amin, 1985; Rodney, 1975; Wisner, 1988). Community development as an approach for DRR with indigenous peoples can therefore offer alternative futures, policies and processes when used to respond to the injustices that are innate within larger development processes (Mayo, 1975). This being so, the concept of "alternative development" needs to be critically understood as it can simply be a repackaging of Western development that is all too often oppressive to indigenous peoples.

7.3 Part Two: A critique on "alternative development" for DRR

7.3.1 Sustainable development for DRR

Uitto and Shaw (2016) state that sustainable development and DRR are closely linked with each other. They maintain that disasters often affect infrastructure, create financial losses and disrupt social relationships and processes. In the absence of sustainable development, disaster risks and impacts can be amplified. Within this conversation, Natarajan-Tschannerl (2010) argues that Western development has reinvented itself into a more acceptable concept such as sustainable development. These terms are used to incorporate the social dimension of development and present themselves as alternatives to Western development (Mayo, 1975). The problem that needs to be asked here however is what an alternative actually means in the context of development (Natarajan-Tschannerl, 2010). In her lecture about sustainable development, Natarajan-Tschannerl emphasises how the concept of an alternative is simply a repackaging of development to make it appear more acceptable to the people who once rejected that form of development. This is the same as in the field of DRR, where DRR is an integral part of development theories and practice. In the book, Radical Social Work, Mayo (1975) argues that (sustainable) development cannot be presented as an alternative if the conditions and structures that cause injustices and oppressive relationships remain unchallenged.

Then the question to people who remain unsettled with these so-called development alternatives remains, "so what is it that you want?" One of the environmental activists who worked with a local NGO said that advocates of mega projects would often tell him that if he thought the injustices and disaster risks that emanated from development such as mining were so great, then would he rather opt for no development at all and simply let the people live like they did 100 or 50 years ago? To him this question reflected the classic unwillingness of governments and corporations to enter into a dialogue with indigenous peoples to talk about the issue at hand. It is a manifestation of the rejection to listen to their voices and understand the people and their relationships behind these voices. He adds that such questions are a way of

evading corporate accountabilities to the injustices that their projects do to indigenous peoples and communities. He further narrates that, when confronted with the exploitation and injustices that development projects create, corporations would threaten them about withdrawing support for the development of indigenous communities. He said that this threat generated anger from people who thought that without these development projects, their life would become much harder. According to Rodney (1974), this is how capitalism works in development. It makes people think and believe that they can do nothing without external support. In a sense, it makes them become even more dependent on mega projects that continue to feed the global capitalist economic system.

In his book Delinking, Amin (1990) calls for economic autonomy among Southern nations, where one does not have to be subjected to the global economic system. While he encourages these countries to operate within their own development and economic systems, he makes it clear that he does not mean complete autarky. The same principle is echoed in the elders' chants as they acknowledge the need to exist and co-exist with one another. This is further mirrored in their stories, as well as in the narratives of community leaders who have expressed many times in their sharing that external support is necessary in terms of developing improved DRR systems. But, one of the important things they shared in relation to this discussion has to be mentioned here, and that is how the elders emphasised that the search for new knowledge and the quest for a better life (some call it development) must not result in injustices for others or the creation of new risks that affect the less-privileged members of a community. They explained how this was based on their experiences, where oppressive agendas could be masked as a form of benevolence to indigenous peoples. These are issues of injustice in development that impact DRR. As an alternative, sustainable development for DRR must be able to address these issues of injustice that are inherent in development processes. Otherwise, it remains the same kind of oppressive development, repackaged with a new name, but with the same unjust agenda for indigenous peoples that continue to create risks instead of truly sustainable development.

This critique on sustainable development brings in the concept of corporate social

responsibility (CSR) (of mining companies) as another alternative form of development to reflect upon. This is particularly important considering the face that corporations often resort to CSR as a means of entry to indigenous communities for sustaining their support of continued operation. More so, it is important to examine how this form of alternative development impacts DRR with indigenous peoples. This is so as most of the CSR projects in indigenous communities are offered by corporations whose extractive projects and activities pose disaster risks to indigenous communities (Holden & Jacobson, 2012).

7.3.2 Corporate social responsibility: an oxymoron in DRR practice with indigenous peoples

There are several contentions about CSR and DRR. Among these are whether or not a corporation is engaging in CSR to accomplish a business interest or as a genuine expression of ethical responsibility to the people (Johnson, Connolly, & Carter, 2011). Other criticisms draw on CSR as an oxymoron – how a corporation whose main interest is profit can be responsible at the same time (Cloud, 2007). But whatever the intention of the corporation is, CSR has become an important part of the practice of community development (Eweje, 2006). These corporate projects and activities are administered either through a partner NGO or implemented directly by the corporations in collaboration with organisations such as the local government. Indeed, CSR has played a significant role in DRR (Bhatt, 2002), so much so that most corporations consider DRR a strategic CSR activity.

While there seems to be a general acknowledgement that CSR contributes to DRR, local NGO and indigenous workers in the Cordillera region of the Philippines were engaged in an informal dialogue about this. Some of them argued that, if it was for DRR and as long as there were no conditions that put the people and their communities and organisations at risk, they should take this and make sure that the projects are implemented in accordance with how the people might want to do it. They added that if they were not going to take these projects, other groups would take them, and they would be implemented anyway. So, rather than having these projects land with the wrong group, they agreed that taking on CSR partnerships and ensuring transparency to the people over the course of its implementation was the best way to go.

Tierney (2007) posits that disasters have a significant impact on businesses. She adds that corporations and businesses can lose a significant amount of profit when their operations are disrupted or affected by disasters. Thus, Twigg (2001) argues that this is the main reason why DRR has become a strategic focus of CSR.
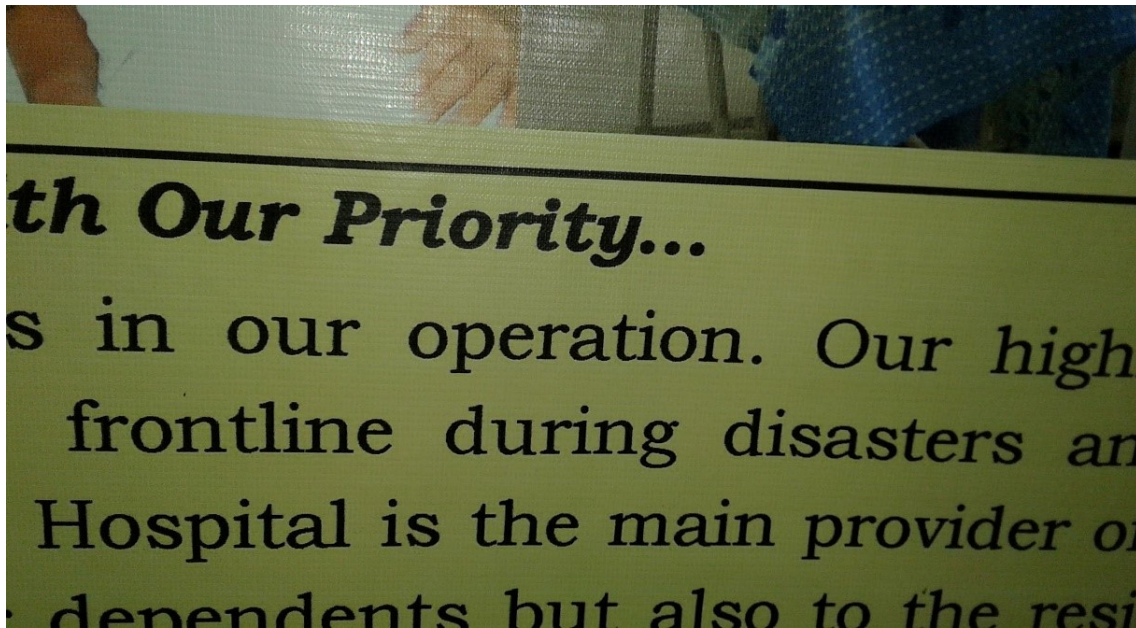
Figure 7.2: Part of a statement of a statement of a mining company says that with their highly advanced technology, they strive to be in the frontline during disasters . . . (Regional Mining Safety Council Meeting, 17 June 2016, Baguio City, Philippines).

During the regional mining safety council meeting of different corporations in the Cordillera, Philippines, each of the companies reported on what they do as part of their CSR plan. Most of the programmes mentioned had something to do with livelihood projects. Participants at this meeting believed that these programmes all lead to the enhancement of a community's DRR that eventually results in their resilience to disasters. True enough, DRR literatures mention that improving the economic livelihood of people increases a community's resilience to disasters (Cannon et al., 2003). However, the contention that disaster risks among indigenous peoples emanate largely from extractive projects, such as mining, as in this case, is a reality that corporations and CSR have failed to recognise (Holden & Jacobson, 2012). Telesetsky (2015) maintains that more than being an ethical responsibility, corporations have a

legal responsibility to protect communities from disasters, especially those that arise from their operations and activities directly.

Aside from the political issues raised about CSR, the technocratic responses to disasters that are derived from these and embodied in DRR plans promote indigenous peoples' reliance upon technocratic responses to disasters (Hewitt, 1983, 1995). This influences them to abandon their indigenous knowledge and practices (Hilhorst et al., 2015). In doing so, they become more vulnerable to disasters with the only resources available belonging to those with more power (Hewitt, 1983).

In the midst of the debates about CSR, mining companies assert that their existence and their activities have legal bases. One of the participants at the regional mining safety meeting said, "We did not just go into the communities where we are, we went through a process. We were sanctioned by the law." He was absolutely right. It was mentioned earlier that these corporations are in fact backed by both international and national laws and supported by institutional programs and pronouncements. Thus, rather than paying attention to the issues and disaster risks inherent to their projects and activities, governments recognise them (and identify them in DRR plans) as partners for DRR. This is echoed by the official of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau who said that having been sanctioned by the law, governments will always consider mining corporations as benevolent actors for development and DRR.

As can be gleaned from indigenous peoples' experiences, mining will always exist. However, resistance to mining will likewise continue. *Kankanaey* people themselves acknowledge the need for external support in terms of enhancing their existing DRR and strengthening their resilience to disasters. However, they have made it clear that these expressed needs must not be taken advantage of by external institutions and corporations to carry out their own agenda over indigenous peoples and their resources through development projects and activities. Moreover, studies have shown that CSR can potentially contribute to building communities' resilience to disasters (Bhatt, 2002; Twigg, 2001). Indeed, NGO participants argued that it is also a form of social negligence not to facilitate peoples' access to these resources that can be beneficial to their communities' DRR efforts.

However, as discussed in the previous section, the fact that there may be some hidden agendas in CSR cannot be ignored, as these relate to DRR with indigenous peoples. As mentioned earlier, corporations often seek partnerships with NGOs and local governments in the implementation of DRR projects and activities. These local institutions therefore play a critical role in confronting the hidden agendas of CSR. Engaging people in the development process can therefore be a viable mechanism in increasing people's vigilance to the oppressive interests that may come along with CSR. This form of engagement can be built upon what participants from the NGOs suggest based on their experiences implementing DRR projects supported by CSR. First, they believe that CSR for DRR needs to be embedded into the overall development goals of the community. As such, people are involved in the process of identifying the DRR projects and activities that they deem relevant to their contexts. This is instead of the usual pre-designed and pre-identified projects being offered directly to them or through NGOs who are merely the implementers of these activities. Secondly, they explain how and encourage CSR representatives to participate in DRR planning and make commitments to support projects and activities identified by the people as a way of avoiding imposed DRR projects and activities. In this case, power relations that may emerge from the planning process need to be guarded (Mercer et al., 2010). Thirdly, they advise that CSR has to be transparent to the people about the sources of funds and that there must be full respect for their decisions and the conditions for the implementation of the projects. Lastly, they challenge CSR to acknowledge that the DRR projects and activities they facilitate for indigenous peoples are not simply expressions of benevolence on their part, but rather as an obligation to share a bit of the profit they generate from their host communities, which would have been theirs in the first place.

Telesetsky (2015) maintains that beyond CSR, it is a "corporate human rights obligation" of corporations to respond to disaster risks that arise from their activities (p. 1003). Bhatt (2002) adds that corporations need to ensure that people and their communities are protected from the potential risks that their activities bring and also ensure their wellbeing. By acknowledging these, CSR can have the potential to meaningfully contribute in building indigenous people's resilience to disaster. It is only then that, indigenous people's DRR can possibly shape CSR and not the other way around. It remains questionable however, whether this can so easily

be translated into practice, and looking back on the stories of *Kankanaey* people and their oppressive and exploitative experiences with mining, which they claim to be a hazard that challenges their daily survival, using CSR as an alternative to development still needs to be critically reflected upon.

7.3.3   Sustainable/responsible mining: "Digging to disasters"

In relation to CSR, Dashwood (2013) states that mining has now taken on a new image: "sustainable mining." She argues that CSR is being used to (re)build the image of mining as responsible corporations that respond to the social issues and needs of people. However, Gamu and Dauvergne (2018) add that despite this, people are still hounded by the injustices that are consummated by mining corporations. In terms of DRR, these mining companies have been acknowledged by local governments and agencies as "partners" in building indigenous people's resilience and resources, but Holden and Jacobson (2012, p. 2) argue that contrary to the common notion that mining brings sustainable development into communities, it is actually a way of "digging to disasters." They underscored both the environmental and social costs of mining in explaining this. Holden and Jacobson (2012) argue that the proponents of sustainable development (through responsible mining) are in fact after sustaining (economic) growth or "intergenerational equity" (p. 186). These discourses support what a participant from the local NGO said about how *responsible* or *sustainable* mining could not be used as an alternative for *mining*. To them, mining, however it is described is extractive and destructive to the environment and therefore a threat to the survival of the future generations of indigenous peoples.

7.3.4   Part Three: A way forward for DRR amongst indigenous peoples: Community development as a new possibility

"What then?" This was a question that a participant from the Mines and Geosciences Bureau asked. He was commenting on what he claimed to be "anti-development" activists who seemed to reject and question everything, including the alternatives. It is a good question to ponder as one seeks for ways of confronting the issues of injustice in the development process,

while at the same time finding new means to facilitate a better quality of life for indigenous peoples. The elders themselves acknowledged that it was not bad to strive for economic progress, as long as this was not achieved by oppressing and exploiting others. Additionally, they added the importance of knowing how to share what they have with those who have none. There is no perfect approach to doing this as each framework has a downside. This was shown in the case of the development alternatives that were discussed earlier. However, building upon how indigenous peoples themselves define development can make a difference. This is an area where community development presents as an alternative, specifically in DRR with indigenous peoples.

There have also been critiques about community development and its potential to become repressive (Mayo, 1975). However, Mayo adds that community development can also be liberating when used to facilitate a development process that responds to issues of injustice and oppression. Doing this requires community development projects and activities, such as DRR, to be anchored in indigenous ways of life that are a necessary framework for development efforts with them. However, there is also contention on whether or not indigenous peoples have a framework of their own for development. These indigenous frameworks for development are mostly designed by international bodies such as the World Bank (Ona, 2015). However, indigenous peoples, such as the *Kankanaey*, do have their own concepts and frameworks for development. The difficulty lies in the fact that these are unwritten and, as Ona (2015) further notes,, they need to be understood in the context of their indigenous culture(s). Interviews with *Kankanaey* elders revealed the concept of a "common good." This is the term used to connote development, as "development" does not translate exactly into the local language. The concept of the common good, as discussed in Chapter Four, builds from *Kankanaey* ethics and practices of putting the welfare of all before one's self-interest. I will articulate this concept of the common good as a development framework for indigenous peoples by contextualising this within the four pillars of the Philippine Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act and providing a deeper reflection on how these can be better engaged by using some of Smith's (2012) Twenty-Five Indigenous Projects.

The four pillars of the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act: right to ancestral domain, right to self-governance and empowerment, right to social justice and human rights, and the right to cultural integrity were initially discussed by a consortium of NGOs in the Cordillera as a potential framework for development. This was in the midst of the indigenous peoples' struggles for the protection of their lands in the region. However, since the consortium disintegrated, the dialogue about this framework did not continue. I hope that by giving life to this dialogue in this thesis, the conversations will be resurrected through other indigenous researchers from the region who do further studies that critique this framework. Perhaps then, a new or better indigenous peoples' framework for development can be articulated in a way that indigenous peoples, like the *Kankanaey*, can call their own. I will now discuss what these four pillars are according to how these were conceptualised in the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act of the Philippines. Then, by taking insights from the narratives of the elders about the common good and how these can be expressed in present DRR projects and activities, I explain how these four pillars can be strengthened by using some of Smith's (2012) Twenty-Five Indigenous Projects to become a development framework for indigenous peoples, particularly in community development projects and activities for DRR. These four pillars of the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act are presented alongside Smith's (2012) indigenous projects as follows:

Table 7.1: The four pillars of the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act opposite some of Smith's Twenty-Five Indigenous Projects.

Four Pillars of the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act	Smith's Twenty-Five Indigenous Projects
The right to ancestral domains	Returning
The right to self-governance and empowerment	Democratizing the indigenous governance
The right to social justice and human rights	Representing
The right to cultural integrity	Discovering the beauty of our knowledge

7.3.4.1   The right to ancestral domain

This refers to the right of indigenous peoples to claim, own, develop and manage their own ancestral domain. Ancestral domain is defined as ". . . *all areas generally belonging to ICCs/IPs comprising lands, inland waters, coastal areas, and natural resources therein, held under a claim of ownership, occupied or possessed by ICCs/IPs, themselves or through their ancestors, communally or individually since time immemorial, continuously to the present. . .* " (Congress of the Philippines, 1997, p. 6). In the context of community development and DRR with indigenous peoples, the elders maintain that DRR projects and activities must not only recognise this right but reinforce their claim to ancestral domain and lands. An example of this project is the use of participatory 3D mapping for DRR. As a development tool, it involves the participation of all sectors of the community, not only for DRR. As one of the elders mentioned, participatory 3D mapping can help define geographical boundaries that indigenous peoples can use to support their claims to ancestral domain and lands. This elder witnessed the participatory 3D mapping for DRR that was part of my research activities in the village of Madaymen.

This statement by an elder leads me to Smith's (2012) **returning** as one of the indigenous projects. Here, she (1999, p. 156) mentions that this project is closely related to claiming; "it involves the returning of the lands, rivers and mountains to their indigenous owners." A DRR project or activity such as participatory 3D mapping helps draw geographical boundaries that define the ancestral domains that need to be returned to the indigenous peoples. While observing the villagers of Madaymen engaging in these activities, I saw people recalling, articulating and appreciating their indigenous knowledge, practices and relationships that can be useful in DRR. This form of DRR project is something that community development can reflect on and promote to facilitate the returning of indigenous peoples' lands to their rightful owners and also restore the knowledge and relationships that have been stolen by modernisation as a new form of colonisation.

7.3.4.2   The right to self-governance and empowerment

In its definition of self-governance, the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act states that: "*The*

State recognizes the inherent right of ICCs/IPs to self-governance and self-determination and respects the integrity of their values, practices and institutions. Consequently, the State shall guarantee the right of ICCs/IPs to freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development" (Congress of the Philippines, 1997, p.6). This provision provides the basis for the continuing campaign for autonomy for indigenous peoples in the Cordillera region. As discussed in Chapter One, this campaign for autonomy has been rejected twice in a referendum made by indigenous peoples. Analysis has it that the provisions of this proposed autonomy did not truly reflect the indigenous peoples' vision for self-determination but, rather, served the interests of some politicians.

In relation to the elder's concept of common good, a development process or activity must ensure that it addresses the indigenous peoples' real sentiments and aspirations for self-governance and their means of "developing" and "empowering" themselves. In the context of disasters, projects and activities must allow indigenous peoples to discover, define and run their own DRR that sees them not only as passive victims but as people with capacities and strengths (Gaillard, 2010). A community development process that promotes this concept of DRR needs to go beyond the empowerment of people, which can be repressive in its own ways. To overcome this, it must build on the recognition that everyone, "*including all the poor, . . . and all the deprived*" have innate potentials and capacities [for DRR] (Mayo, 1975,p. 143). Mayo (1975) further states that the focus of community development must include the breaking down of barriers that prevent people from recognising their innate potential and using it for their own development.

Smith (2012) takes this discussion further with her **democratizing the indigenous governance** project. Here, she mentions insights that provide powerful reflections about indigenous self-governance. She (2012, p. 157) states that "democratizing in indigenous terms is a process of extending participation outwards through reinstating indigenous principles of collectivity and public debate without necessarily recreating a parliamentary or senatorial style of government." She also critiques the formation of contemporary indigenous organisations, which she says "were formed through the direct involvement of states and governments"

through the legislation that operationalised these (2012, p. 157). In their sharing about indigenous sustaining practices in Chapter Four, the elders talked about actions (e.g., ensuring food security) and institutions (e.g., bonfire sessions) that naturally emerge from people in villages as a response to disasters and as inherent DRR measures. Community development that focuses on DRR with indigenous peoples must recognise and work within these existing structures and capacities within a given context. Doing so helps indigenous peoples with their quests for self-governance and empowerment that are premised on the principles of democratizing the indigenous governance project.

7.3.4.3   The right to social justice and human rights

This provision in the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act can be summed up as the freedom of indigenous peoples from discrimination, rights to equal opportunities and treatment and access to basic services. It talks about the rights of indigenous women, children and youth and all those unrepresented and underrepresented in politics and decision-making processes. According to the *Kankanaey* elders' perspectives, social justice must be at the core of development processes amongst indigenous peoples. From their stories, social justice intersects with the concept of the common good. It means responding to oppression and inequalities in the way they live their own lives with others. The *Kankanaey* concept of social justice will be discussed in detail in the second section of Chapter Eight when I explain the "just practice framework." In the context of DRR, the right to social justice and human rights can be located in what the elders believed to be a consultative process of planning that allows every member of the village to participate and say something about their specific situations. Furthermore, they raised the concept of consensus, where they said that in situations where the villagers could not agree on a specific DRR measure, a consensus had to be reached at the end of the dialogue. Consensus to them means that after the dialogue, people go back to their homes harbouring no bad feelings.

In Smith's (2012, p. 151) 'Twenty-Five Indigenous Projects', she talks about **representing**. She maintains that indigenous peoples must be able to represent themselves, with representation as a "*political concept and . . . form of voice and expression.*" She explains the historical exclusion of indigenous peoples from decision-making processes and how typically,

decisions are made on behalf of indigenous peoples. This relates very much to the current struggles of contemporary *Kankanaey* with development aggression. Community development must therefore be able to address these issues of representation with social justice and human rights serving as an anchor for indigenous peoples' development.

7.3.4.4 The right to cultural integrity

The Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act provides that indigenous peoples and their communities must be accorded the protection of indigenous culture, traditions and institutions. It embodies the recognition of cultural identity, community intellectual rights, rights to religious, cultural sites and ceremonies, and the right to indigenous knowledge systems and practices and to develop own sciences and technologies (Congress of the Philippines, 1997). In the context of DRR, this can be analysed by looking at the indigenous knowledge systems and practices that have been disenfranchised through the promotion of an alleged binary between indigenous and scientific knowledge by normative DRR responses and approaches. This binary and the possible ways of deconstructing this are elaborated on in Chapter Eight.

In Smith's (2012, p. 161) Twenty-five Indigenous Projects, she talks about **discovering the beauty of our knowledge**. In this project; she speaks to discovering and making "knowledge systems work for indigenous development." She further argues that:

> *"The development of ethno-science and the application of science to matters that interest indigenous peoples such as environmental and resource management or biodiversity, offer some new possibilities for indigenous peoples to engage in with the sciences they find most relevant."* (p. 161).

But she goes further and adds that indigenous knowledge is far more than the environment. Just as how the elders have defined indigenous knowledge, Smith (2012) maintains that this incorporates "values and principles about human behaviour and ethics, about relationships, about wellness and leading a good life" (p. 161). Community development must then be able to articulate and facilitate the rediscovery of this indigenous knowledge in DRR, and to make sure that science can advance indigenous knowledge and the development of indigenous peoples

in accordance with how they conceptualise and want this to be. This indigenous project of "discovering the beauty of knowledge" can be further explored in the discourses and processes of integrating indigenous and scientific knowledge and approaches for DRR (Gaillard & Mercer, 2013; Mercer, Kelman, Suchet-Pearson, & Lloyd, 2009; Mercer et al., 2010). Smith (2012) ends her discussion about this indigenous project with this beautiful statement: "knowledge has beauty and can make the world beautiful if used in a good way" (p. 161). Indeed, an indigenous framework of development that is anchored in cultural integrity that aims to rediscover the beauty of (indigenous) knowledge can lead the way to that beautiful world.

7.4   Conclusion

Development has been used as a new form of conquest (Bodley, 2014). In congruence with the agenda of colonisation, development has resulted in the oppression and exploitation of indigenous peoples worldwide. It has dispossessed them of their lands and resources, which has increased their vulnerabilities to hazards. The process of development has also affected indigenous peoples' relationships. In effect, this has affected their collective DRR responses and approaches. These dynamics and issues of development are significant towards a community development practice of DRR that builds from these understandings. Community development is regarded as one of the approaches to empower people to be able to define their own development and respond to issues affecting them. However, as scholars note, community development also has the potential to become repressive and violate its own liberating agenda (Mayo, 1975; Mowbray, 2011). This brings in the importance of being critical of the alternatives for development, as they may simply be a repackaging of the term and practice of Western development that harbours the same issues of oppression, exploitation and inequalities.

Given this critique of the development alternatives such as sustainable development, CSR, and sustainable/responsible mining, "what then?" is an important question that needs to be answered. This question is important to ponder especially as one seeks for better and more meaningful ways of working for DRR with indigenous peoples. *Kankanaey* elders argue that economic progress is not bad, and one can strive to attain this. However, they also emphasise

how economic progress in the context of *Kankanaey* life sets certain conditions that need to be met and honoured. Community development, with all its critiques and limitations, is presented as a new possibility with an emphasis on its potential to build its approach from how indigenous peoples themselves define and envision their own development. This makes community development true to its liberating purpose. However, indigenous peoples' definitions of development and the way they want to attain it needs to be articulated and anchored in its responses and approaches to DRR. An attempt to develop indigenous frameworks for development is a means of articulating what development means to them. These indigenous frameworks for development build upon the four pillars of the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act of the Philippines and insights derived from the narratives of the elders speak in particular to the common good for all. It is further strengthened by linking each of these four pillars to some of Smith's (2012) Twenty-Five Indigenous Projects.

Chapter 8

Deconstructing Binaries through a Social Justice Lens: implications to social work practice with indigenous peoples in disaster contexts

8.1   Introduction

The social work literature emphasises that social justice is at the heart of its professional practice (Briskman, 2014; Gray, Coates, & Hetherington, 2008; Ife, 2001; Pease & Fook, 1999). This commitment of social work to analyse societal issues with a social justice lens is regarded as one of the strengths of the profession (Gray, Coates, & Yellow Bird, 2008). Therefore, social work must be able to confront the barriers that hamper people in striving to attain their quest for social justice (Pease & Fook, 1999). Amongst these obstacles are the binaries such as the differentiations created between indigenous and "modern" or scientific perspectives about disasters and how these manifest in DRR responses and approaches.

Dominelli and Campling (2002) explains binaries in the context of social work. She argues that this differentiation results in a "them-us" division, where anyone who does not belong to the dominant group is subjected to marginalisation (p. 38). She adds that because the dominant groups are attributed with superior characteristics, those who do not belong

are framed as "marginalised, deviant or abnormal." (p. 38). Furthermore, she states that the dominant groups often benefit from the binaries "at the expense of those whom they have defined as inferior" (p. 38). These binaries were reflected numerous times within my study such as Western/non-Western, insider/outsider and indigenous/scientific. With an emphasis in the binary between indigenous and scientific knowledge in DRR, this chapter deconstructs this often-assumed binary through the application of the Just Practice Framework.

Mercer et al. (2010) notes that the differentiation between indigenous and scientific knowledge in DRR only further disenfranchises the marginalised. As a profession built on anti-oppressive and liberating principles (Briskman, 2014; Dominelli & Campling, 2002; Dominelli, 2015; Ife, 2012), social work needs to deconstruct the binaries such as those between indigenous and scientific knowledge. Part one of the chapter explains Finn and Jacobson's (2003) Just Practice Framework and illustrates each of its five themes with examples on how the indigenous *Kankanaey* people continue to deconstruct the binary between indigenous and scientific knowledge in DRR. These five themes are: Meaning, Context, Power, History, and Possibility. The discussions and examples for each of these themes were derived from an article published in the International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction. Part two of the chapter translates this Just Practice Framework into the context of how indigenous peoples live and practise social justice. It offers some ways by which social workers and other professionals may want to consider in a critically informed practice with indigenous peoples in disaster contexts.

8.2   Part One: The just practice framework: deconstructing the binary between indigenous and scientific knowledge in DRR

To reflect social justice in social work with indigenous peoples in disaster contexts, Finn and Jacobson's (2003) Just Practice lends a critical lens for social workers in their professional practice. This framework helps social workers to formulate disaster responses that capture indigenous peoples' varied perspectives and situations, including what they strive to attain in terms of DRR (and how they might want to attain these). The five themes of the framework

provide a foundation for understanding why and how social justice needs to be considered in working for DRR with indigenous peoples. Each of these five themes will be discussed in this section with an emphasis on how these can be concretely applied to the deconstruction of the binary between indigenous and scientific knowledge in DRR. The creation of binaries often results in further inequalities and marginalisation of those who are already marginalised (Agrawal, 1995). As articulated by indigenous peoples themselves (such as the *Kankanaey*), deconstructing the binaries that present between indigenous and scientific knowledge is a means of attaining a just and more meaningful DRR.

To facilitate a better understanding of the five themes of the Just Practice Framework, I will first describe each of these by using insights from Finn and Jacobson (2003). The descriptions of these five themes are in the context of disasters and indigenous peoples.

- Meanings – this refers to the meanings ascribed to hazards by different actors such as the different professionals, agencies, corporation and the indigenous peoples themselves.

- Context – the context refers to the different actors that come together and the setting in which they are based. The context includes the socio-cultural, political and economic aspects of the setting.

- Power – this theme describes how power mediates the relationships of these different actors and how this applies to DRR work with indigenous peoples.

- History – refers to what history tells us about hazards and how meaning systems and contexts may have changed. It focuses on how indigenous peoples' previous experiences with hazards inform current and future social work practice on DRR.

- Possibilities – explores what possibilities exist for more effective DRR in a social justice frame (as informed by the past, present future) for indigenous peoples.

In the following narratives, the indigenous *Kankanaey* people highlight their experiences with oppressions and inequalities, such as the disregard of their perspectives and ways of life in dominant DRR responses and approaches by a more powerful way of knowing. Marlowe (2014) notes that "*[a]ccepting the status quo is not a tenable position when there are considerations of oppression and inequality that stem from, or are exacerbated by, a particular disaster*" (p. 56). The issues of oppression and inequalities in the indigenous *Kankanaey* people's experiences with the construction of the binary between indigenous and scientific knowledge in DRR are deconstructed using the five themes of the Just Practice Framework as follows:

8.2.1   Meaning (the meanings ascribed to hazards by the different actors)

Finn and Jacobson (2003) argue that meanings emerge from how humans attribute "purpose" and "significance" to something (p. 70). The constructionist paradigm affirms this with its belief that humans interpret the world through the construction of meanings from their daily life experiences, relationships and events (see Holstein & Gubrium, 2008). In other words, as Blumer (1969) notes, meaning is constructed from peoples' contexts, background and experiences. In the context of disasters, Marlowe (2014) states that "[a]n understanding of meaning and people's interpretation of particular experiences" is an essential consideration in disaster responses (p. 49). Ife (2001) adds that social work must recognise the diversity of meanings when working even within one specific culture, where peoples' perspectives and interpretations of a certain phenomenon may vary. Indeed, the interpretation and construction of meanings in disaster contexts can be different amongst responders and this may become problematic across diverse cultural groups. This situation raises the importance of reflexivity in social justice informed social work practice, where one has to be constantly aware of the factors that influence their own construction of meanings and how this might impact on their work with others (see Finn & Jacobson, 2003; Marlowe, 2014; Morgaine, 2014). Blumer's (1969) concept of the "interpretative process" also becomes paramount in this context. Here, he argues that one's expressions of meanings must resonate with those of others through the socialisation process. The social workers' working relationships with people affected by disasters are a part of the larger process of socialisation.

Meaning, as one of the key themes of just practice, is relevant in understanding the varied indigenous peoples' perspectives about disasters and how these can be integrated alongside outsiders' concepts in framing inclusive and meaningful DRR responses and approaches with indigenous communities. The traditional indigenous people's perspectives about natural hazards often situate their relationship with nature as one of harmony (Alcorn, 1993; Cajete, 2000), including major natural hazards such as typhoons. Dekens (2007) argues that indigenous people's responses and approaches to natural hazards emerge from their daily relationships and experiences with nature and with one another. This human–nature relationship was discussed in

length in the theoretical framework of this study. Indigenous people's responses and approaches to natural hazards are expressed in the form of indigenous knowledge and practices that have worked for them for a long time as a part of their DRR (Gaillard and Mercer, 2013; Kelman, Mercer, & Gaillard, 2012). Thus, for the *Kankanaey* elders who hold this perspective, they share what Hewitt (1995) articulates that natural hazards have always been, and will always be, a part of humans' everyday experiences.

However, the contemporary indigenous *Kankanaey* perspectives that reflect those held by the younger generations, such as some community leaders, young professionals and other youth, say otherwise. They challenge the meaning of the human–nature relationship considering what they believe is an increasing vulnerability to natural hazards amongst them. To them, natural hazards need to be carefully reflected upon in terms of locating this into the human–nature relationship. They believe that this human–nature connection is supposed to be seen as a positive form of relationship that does not pose risks to either of the two. Yet, the elders argue that this form of relationship is guided by indigenous ethics, knowledge and practices that respond or mitigate the associated risks. To the elders, nature is sustaining and the hazards that emanate from this is the responsibility of humans who are often remiss in their obligations to their relationship with nature.

In addition to these diverse perspectives about disasters by the same group of indigenous peoples are also those held by outsiders who come to indigenous communities and with them for DRR. These DRR actors come from different backgrounds and experiences that have influenced the way they conceptualise and respond to disasters. Amongst these outsiders are professionals who come from different disciplines, such as social work, that may have different ways of interpreting disasters. Also, as one of the findings of this research show, institutions that work with indigenous peoples frame their DRR programmes according to the way they create meanings within their organisations, such as the influence of their vision and mission and also broader policies and mandates. In relation to this, the just practice of social work in disaster contexts encourages social workers to critically reflect on these meanings and consider how the background and experiences of people who are affected by disasters construct meanings and

how these have to be engaged in working with different responders.

Therefore, the different meanings that people and institutions bring into DRR are important to social work as these offer opportunities for the profession to reflect on its social justice practice with indigenous peoples in disaster contexts. This can be concretely applied in deconstructing the binary between indigenous and scientific knowledge in DRR through bringing together these two forms of information alongside other knowledges for the benefit of indigenous peoples. The indigenous *Kankanaey* elders themselves articulated that different knowledges and approaches to DRR have to be explored to improve what Dekens (2007b) mentioned about collective resilience to disasters. This is illustrated in the following case of an integrated approach to warning systems.

Mother: *The sky is dark and the moon had a ring around it last night. Turn on the radio so we could listen to the weather forecast. There might be a typhoon coming and we need to secure the animals in the farm.*

Son: *Do we need to listen to the weather forecast? I'm sure it is going to rain.*

The son turned on the radio anyway. The weather forecast aired after a few minutes. He tells his mother that it did not say anything about a typhoon. The mother responds:

"That's good to know. But we do not want to take chances. The sky looks really dark and heavy and we need to make sure the cows are secured. Go tell your father about it. I'll go and harvest the remaining cucumbers in the farm."

The boy and his father set out for the farm while the mother went to harvest the cucumbers. It is interesting to note how the mother in the story first noticed the warning signs using indigenous knowledge (a dark and heavy sky). She then sought scientific knowledge (the weather forecast) to confirm this. But the story did not end there. She remained proactive even after her son told her that the weather forecast says there was no typhoon by reverting back to indigenous knowledge and acting upon it. Hewitt (1983) argues that the relationship between humans and nature, with humans being part of nature, makes one able to use indigenous knowledge appropriately in reading warning signs for an impending natural hazard

(this supports how the elders find meaning in human–nature relationships). While no typhoon occurred in that instance, heavy rains, including thunderstorms, came during the night which could have been devastating to unsheltered animals and delicate crops.

Obrist, Pfeiffer and Henley (2010) maintain that being proactive increases indigenous peoples' capacity to build resilience to natural hazards. For the *Kankanaey* woman in the story, her preparedness was driven by the warning signs from both indigenous and scientific knowledge. Another case illustrates this in a different way. A woman from another village narrates that, before she travels to the city, she makes sure that she does not get stranded there or somewhere along the way. It is her practice to listen to the radio for weather forecasts to make sure there are no typhoons before she sets out. If the forecasts say the weather is stormy, she checks with her natural environment to decide whether she needs to cancel her trip or shorten this so that she gets back home before the typhoon occurs. She then continues to monitor weather updates from the media or from authorities.

Coming from these discussions, the integration of indigenous and scientific knowledge in DRR needs to consider the different meanings held by indigenous peoples as these can vary. Indigenous knowledge has to be inclusive of the different perspectives of the indigenous peoples within a specific community. These sets of information are often reflective of the different and sometimes changing meanings people have about disasters. As the elders have defined indigenous knowledge, this can also mean local knowledge which, aside from the wisdom that is held traditionally by the elders, also refers to a body of knowledge that accumulates overtime based on the continuing experiences of indigenous peoples with disasters (which relates meaning to history).

Understanding the meanings behind these realities and processes in the everyday lives of indigenous peoples is an essential framework for social work in formulating its own responses and approaches to disasters. The varied meanings that people hold influence their perspectives and responses to disasters. At the same time, this theme of just practice ushers in the opportunity for social work to contribute to the call of indigenous elders for a continuing deconstruction of the binary between indigenous and scientific knowledge in DRR. These possibilities for

deconstruction of the binaries that impede the realisation of social justice in DRR will be discussed in detail in part two of this chapter. Meanwhile, the context by which these meanings are constructed and negotiated will be explored in the following section.

8.2.2   Context (How the different actors come together and the setting they are based)

Finn and Jacobson (2003) maintain that context is where we make sense of meaning. It represents the place where multiple meanings (e.g., community, society, government) come together at a particular moment. They state that context provides a better grounding for one's understanding of the people (individuals, groups and communities) we work with. Finn and Jacobson state that context includes the larger "social, political, and economic relationships" by which people's interactions take place (p. 70). In DRR with indigenous peoples, context can be reflected in relation to the integration of indigenous and scientific knowledge and approaches. This process provides a space for scientists and indigenous peoples to come together and negotiate how indigenous and scientific knowledge can both be mobilised for a better DRR for indigenous peoples (see Gaillard & Mercer, 2013; Mercer et al., 2010). Along these lines, it is important to note the potential issues of power that emanate from the process of integration (Mercer et al., 2010). This is to ensure that integration does not result in perpetuating the agenda of assimilating indigenous peoples, which is another form of injustice. Context takes into consideration the different actors such as organisations and institutions and the multitudes of people that compromise any particular community, including the roles that these play.

Context also provides social work practice with more insights on what to consider in deconstructing the binary between indigenous and scientific knowledge in DRR. In their narratives about early warning systems for typhoons, indigenous *Kankanaey* elders refer to a changing natural environment, where it has become quite challenging to read the signs conveyed by nature using indigenous knowledge. Social workers working for DRR amongst indigenous peoples are encouraged to reflect on what this means to social justice issues. Aside from these changes in the natural environment, DRR scientists underscore the importance of social and economic factors in understanding vulnerabilities to natural hazards (see Bankoff, 2001;

Blaikie et al., 2014; Cannon, 1994; Wisner & Luce, 1993). These are all essential dimensions to consider for a socially just framework for DRR. At the same time, these discourses also necessitate a discussion of power, which is an important element in the relationships of the different actors that come together for DRR.

8.2.3   Power (How power mediates the relationships of the actors)

Finn and Jacobson (2003) state that power is understood in light of repressive and oppressive relationships. In the disaster context (Marlowe, 2014) maintains that "the sources of power may be varied and emanate from places that are not part of people's everyday experiences" (p. 50). In DRR with indigenous peoples, power can be located in various relationships and activities. For the purpose of consistency with the examples provided in other themes of just practice, I refer to the deconstruction of indigenous and scientific knowledge to discuss power in this particular section of the chapter. Social work must be able to acknowledge the power that intervenes in the relationships of the different actors that come together to respond to disaster situations. Whilst power can be exercised amongst the indigenous peoples themselves, the focus of this discussion is the power that emanates from the relationships between outsiders and the local indigenous communities in an effort to deconstruct the binary between indigenous and scientific knowledge in DRR. To better understand power in this context, I have quoted a statement from an indigenous *Kankanaey* elder. This statement reflects how power mediates the relationships between the indigenous peoples and outsiders (which include the government based on their previous experiences with external organisations and institutions). The statement particularly refers to the effort to deconstruct the binary between indigenous and scientific early warning systems for typhoons.

> "*All of us must be engaged in a continuing search for knowledge that will strengthen our warning systems to typhoons. This benefits no other than the people whose lives and livelihoods are threatened by the impacts of typhoons. However, we must ensure that this search for knowledge does not become oppressive to anyone.*"
> (Elder 2)

The elder echoes what many scholars emphasise that indigenous knowledge or scientific knowledge alone is not enough to build indigenous peoples' resilience to natural hazards. However, he emphasises that this recognition of the need for an outsider's knowledge in DRR should not be taken as an advantage to advance or impose a hidden agenda upon indigenous peoples. This consideration is particularly relevant as the *Kankanaey* people have seen how disaster events have been used to leverage and justify extractive activities in the area with the most notable example being mining where the associated profits were used to assist "vulnerable" groups. Also, power resonates with indigenous peoples' experiences in farming, where they had to risk huge investments and loans to support their production leaving them cash-strapped and dependent on suppliers once their crops had been damaged by typhoons. This situation occurs alongside the wider conversion, by big business interests, of forest lands into prime agricultural land in the villages. This relates back to the injustices of the capitalist form of production (Wisner, 2003) that was discussed as one of the considerations for context as a theme of the just practice.

Foucault (1982) maintains that power is exercised in a variety of institutions and actions. This manifests in the formulation and implementation of municipal disaster risk reduction and management plans of the local governments. Whilst these identify a number of indigenous practices and knowledge as part of their early warning systems, local governments are bounded by policies and procedures that set the guidelines on what is allowable as a budget expenditure (DILG, 2015). And whilst it might be possible to justify indigenous knowledge and practices as an area for government expenses as local government officials claim, they add that it can be challenging to do this. Hall (2001), in his analysis of Foucault's notion of power, knowledge and discourse, argues that policies, procedures and programmes are the products of discourses. Within this context, it is significant for social work to analyse how policies relating to disaster responses advantage or disadvantage certain groups such as indigenous peoples and their narratives on DRR. Hall further emphasises the power of discourses to shape institutions and policies. The anti-oppressive purpose of social work (Dominelli, 2002) and how this might be applied in leveraging the power of discourses therefore becomes an essential underpinning for social workers' responses to DRR with indigenous peoples.

The integration of indigenous and scientific knowledge in DRR as one of the means of deconstructing the alleged binary between the two notes the suppression of indigenous knowledge by a more powerful or superior knowledge that has then become the basis of institutional policies and programmes on DRR (see Mercer et al., 2010). Thus, it is essential for social work to critically reflect on how it might be able to empower people and communities to break down this power in disaster scenarios. At the same time, social work must also be able to acknowledge the potential of the professional practice to become oppressive (Mayo, 1975).

Hewitt (1983) further provides an understanding on how the power of scientific knowledge to posture itself as the highly advanced warning systems in response to natural hazards weakens indigenous people's relationships with nature. The human–nature relationship has been known as the base for indigenous peoples in sustaining their environment (Alcorn, 1993; Cajete, 2000), and also in developing their early warning systems for typhoons and other natural hazards (Dekens, 2007a). In this sense, the weakening of the human–nature relationships by scientific knowledge that is supported by the dominant practice of DRR (Hewitt, 1995) may compromise indigenous people's capacity to strengthen their resilience to disasters. Within this discourse, it is essential for social work to reflect on which DRR stance(s) it takes and how this might benefit or disadvantage indigenous peoples. Finn and Jacobson (2003) maintain that social work builds on the innate capacities and power of people to respond to their issues and facilitate the development of themselves and their communities. This resonates in one of the basic principles in social work which promotes the capacity and determination of people and communities and their communities to make change (in an oppressive relationship) (ISFW, 2014).

Power as a discourse in the application of social justice in DRR amongst indigenous peoples, also needs to build upon an understanding of the layers of oppressions that a particular group may deal with and continue to experience. As Marlowe (2014) notes, "[i]t is also necessary to recognise that people do not experience oppression(s) in isolation" and these multiple layers of oppressive experiences may impact on peoples' everyday lives and relationships (p. 55). This understanding is particularly relevant to the relationships of

outsiders and the local (indigenous peoples) as their experiences of oppressions may make them vulnerable to the exercise of what Finn and Jacobson (2003) refers to as "power over" them (p. 70). Adams, Blumenfeld, Castaneda, Hackman, Peters and Zuniga (2010) add that oppression may also become internalised and this may delimit people from recognising their potentials and capacities to respond to their own issues and situations. Social work, then needs to consider how it might be able to facilitate an empowering DRR amongst indigenous peoples. Social work involves working with those in "powerless positions" (Briskman, 2014, p. 164). Therefore, the Just Practice Framework, in the context of disasters, challenges social work to recognise indigenous people's experiences of oppressions and be able to facilitate a DRR, where power is shared by those who possess it with those who have none.

8.2.4   History (What history tells us about hazards and how meaning systems and contexts may have changed)

Smith (1999) maintains that history is shaped according to the narratives of the ones writing this. Thus, she argues that indigenous peoples' histories were understood according to Western accounts of colonisation and that carries the elements of an oppressive and repressive institution. Furthermore, Freire (2004) argues that history is important so as not to repeat oppressive stories of the past in present and future human relationships. History, then, is an essential part of the decolonising project of social work (Gray, et al., 2013). It offers an understanding of how meanings were constructed and how these influenced present actions (context) and relationships (power). Therefore, this provides guideposts on what could not be repeated and what could be done for the better (Finn and Jacobson, 2003). Dominelli (2014) argues that social work had developed its responses to disasters from past experiences. When applied to a disaster context, history provides greater insights about people's experiences with previous disasters and the ways by which different actors, including social workers, have responded to these. Then the past, present and future are reintegrated to facilitate the emergence of new meanings and contexts such as a critically informed social work practice with indigenous peoples and DRR.

Indigenous peoples' "backwardness" as portrayed in history (Smith, 2012) supports the dominant DRR practice that frames them as vulnerable sectors to the hazards that are inherent in the kind of environment they live (see Blolong, 2001). This historical presentation justifies the need for external DRR interventions to help them thrive in an unruly, natural environment through the "application of appropriate technology" (Bankoff, 2001, p. 3). Thus, DRR responses that emerge from this kind of history impose what Gaillard (2010) refers to as a top-down process that is devoid of people's participation and disregards internal potentials and capacities. Within this context, history as an element of just practice provides a critical analysis of the power that emanates between indigenous and scientific knowledge and approaches in DRR.

Bankoff (2001) adds that understanding hazards from a historical perspective allows one to evaluate the "sequence of events that can turn a physical phenomenon into a social crisis (p. 3). These include "socio-economic and political factors" that result to people's vulnerabilities to hazards (p. 3). But, he emphasised that history also suggests that these socio-economic and political factors that increase peoples' vulnerabilities to disasters only happen in the Third World. This brings back Smith (2012) who argues that history is always crafted through the mind of the one writing and narrating the stories. In the context of disasters, Garcia - Acosta (2017) maintains that people learn from their experiences in the past in shaping better DRR responses and approaches. This includes responding to and challenging the injustices that manifest in disasters and impede the practice of a meaningful DRR.

History as can be gleaned from indigenous people's struggles to oppose oppression and exploitation offer stories that can become a source of inspiration in resisting power and challenging the status quo (see Mudd, 1985; Razon & Hensman, 1976). The Igorot indigenous peoples, that include the *Kankanaey*, are a part of this history of struggle. Among these are the oppositions that stopped the construction of the Chico Dam project from 1977 to the early 1980s. This project could have submerged three provinces of the Cordillera region. It was a painful history, where indigenous lives have been lost, such as the famous leader, Macliing Dulag (Bantayog, 2015). However, such history tells a story that collective resistance to power is possible. Another form of success and change that have resulted from indigenous people's

struggles in the Philippines is the landmark passage of the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act of 1997. Amongst the indigenous *Kankanaey* of Kibungan, their continuing resistance to mining operations resulted in the bringing up to the Congress and Senate a proposed law for the exemption of the municipality from large-scale mining and other extractive operations. This law passed in Congress and is currently being deliberated in the Senate. Social workers and development workers have all been part of this history of struggle and resistance amongst indigenous peoples.

Whilst it is true that history is made and written by the winners, a part of examining history is looking for alternative stories of indigenous peoples; of exceptions to the dominant narratives that situate indigenous peoples as agents and committed to particular causes and values. Whilst this history is more difficult to trace, it is absolutely essential. Social work's historical roots are based in traditions of responding to powerful structures (Reisch, 2014). Thus, social workers, as social justice agents, also need to be historians. They should be trained to be able to look for strengths, alternative stories, to challenge dominant discourses that allow them to see beyond "sanctioned histories." The just practice framework of social work offers this possibility.

8.2.5   Possibility (What possibilities exist for more effective DRR in a social justice frame – as informed by the past, present and future)

Freire (2004) postulates the idea of fatalistic resignation, wherein he explains that oppression can falsely shape people's thinking that nothing can be done to change an oppressive situation. Therefore, Freire continues, the oppressed believe that resignation and conformity to the oppressors is the only option left for them. Like Freire, Finn and Jacobson (2003) believe that this fatalistic resignation needs to be challenged. They argue that social work needs to strive to explore possibilities that challenge this fatalistic thinking by shifting focus from the oppressive experience to "human agency, which is the capacity to act in the world as an intentional, creative, meaning-making being, whose actions are shaped and constrained but never fully determined by life circumstances" (p. 72).

This possibility can be explored in the integration of indigenous and scientific knowledge in DRR. It has been argued that issues of power may emanate from the relationships of the different actors for DRR with indigenous peoples. Mercer et al. (2010) suggest that one of the ways of addressing these issues of power is through a participatory framework by which indigenous peoples themselves become active participants in reflecting on and addressing the injustices that may emerge and impede the meaningful integration of indigenous and scientific knowledge in DRR. This participatory process is likewise echoed in Hiwasaki, Luna, Syamsidik and Shaw (2014).

This participatory framework calls for DRR planners and implementers at the local level to explore possibilities and opportunities that allow people in the communities to participate more meaningfully in the integration process. These include the multiple factors that influence power relations within the process such as gender, social status and community relationships. In considering gender as an element of participation for instance, Lennie (1999) argues that the daily schedules of women need to be considered to ensure their presence in, and contribution to, the process. Considering their daily schedules also ensures that their participation does not reinforce their 24-hour workload.

Additionally, people in communities have a tendency to entrust decisions and processes to educated members and those who have some degree of influence (such as political figures) and those who are economically well off (i.e., have power). Considering these and other factors, it is likewise important to be constantly aware that the integration of indigenous and scientific knowledge can be regarded as a "scientific" DRR process. This awareness brings in the concept of possibility. As a theme of just practice, possibility challenges those who are involved in the integration (including social workers) to find ways by which indigenous peoples can catch up with the scientific process. As the indigenous *Kankanaey* elders note, they often require a careful and slower pace that goes with the "rhythm" of their daily lives. Also, the field experiences for this research provide insights in working with indigenous elders that can be explored as a possibility in involving them in the integration of indigenous and scientific knowledge in DRR. Seeking the elders' knowledge and wisdom requires reaching out to them – a form of a relational

bridge that opens further dialogue between scientific and indigenous knowledge systems (and power). The possibilities for a more effective DRR for indigenous peoples lie in being able to address the issues of power that are inherent in the relationship of the different actors that come together in disaster events.

As can be gleaned from the previous discussions, possibility embodies all the other key themes of the Just Practice Framework. If history has shaped indigenous knowledge in DRR as inferior to scientific knowledge and therefore the creation of a binary between these two forms of information (Agrawal, 1974), social work must endeavour to find new opportunities (context) that offer better relationships (power) by which the different meanings and interpretations of hazards are recognised for a more meaningful and empowering DRR.

Challenging power as a means of putting up possibility can be risky for individuals, agencies and communities. The history of indigenous people's resistance to power in the Cordillera region (as told earlier) tell of stories of horror, including loss of lives and freedom (through incarceration). A possibility focus does not mean we do not anticipate or think about risk. Rather, it is that we are not paralysed by it. A possibility focus is trying to find the ways in which we can work with others and identify the small steps to social justice so that meaningful and sustainable change can be realised. It may mean that sometimes big steps are required but often these big shifts are accompanied by a lot of background work.

In summary, the Just Practice Framework in the context of disasters and indigenous peoples may be presented in the following diagram (Figure 8.1). Like the indigenous people's intergenerational concept of their existence (Cajete, 2000; Malanes, 2002), the diagram shows that the relationships between the five themes of just practice is open and continuing. These five themes do not exist independently but interact and intersect with one another. It could also be that some of these themes may be emphasised more than others in certain contexts and instances. For instance, the context of the indigenous people's experiences with disasters necessarily influences the meanings they derive from these. Their relationships as a community and also with external DRR actors also affect the manner in which they construct meanings from their experiences with disasters. As power mediates the relationships of people in disaster

contexts, history also shapes present and future relationships that may offer better possibilities for DRR responses.
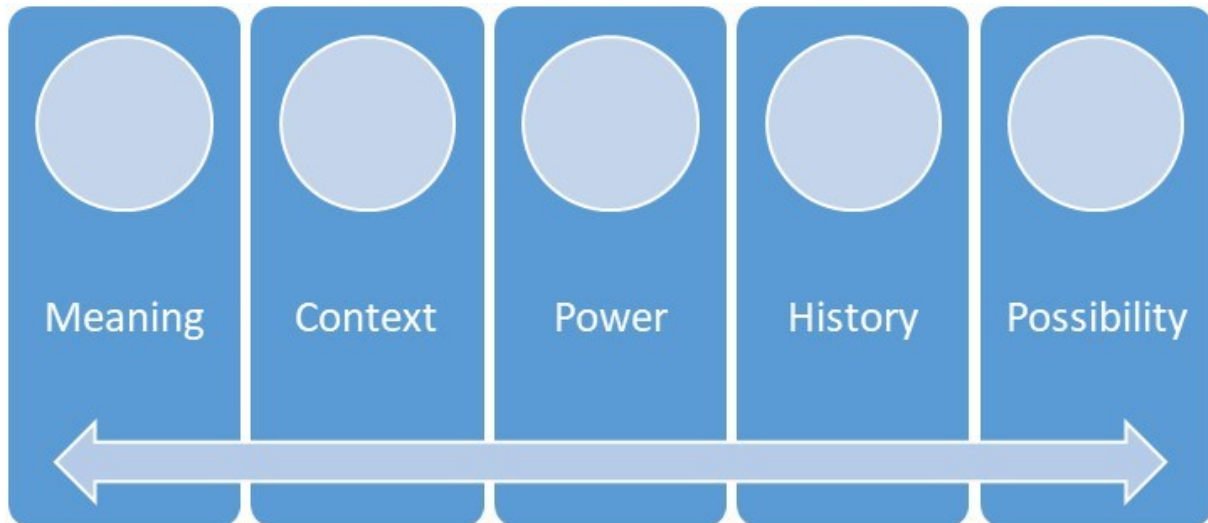

Figure 8.1: The Just Practice Framework in DRR with indigenous peoples.

8.3 Part Two: A social justice informed DRR practice with indigenous peoples

This section builds on the last statement in part one about the possibilities for a just and empowering DRR for indigenous peoples. The Just Practice Framework offers a path for social work practice on DRR with indigenous peoples to sense and honour social justice along the process. Given this, social workers and other actors working for DRR with indigenous peoples must consider ways that the Just Practice Framework can be translated according to how indigenous peoples think of and practise social justice in relation to their ordinary, everyday lives. This includes how they respond to everyday hazards. Just like other English terms such as disasters and development, social justice does not also translate to the indigenous *Kankanaey* language. From the narratives of the elders, I gathered that social justice does not exist as a concept and therefore it cannot be defined. To them, social justice is lived and practised. An understanding of the framework according to how indigenous peoples' practise this further deconstructs the binary that had been constructed between indigenous and scientific knowledge and approaches in DRR.

I will then attempt to contextualise the five elements of the Just Practice Framework into the indigenous peoples' ways of life as provided in the stories of the elders about how they practise these. This attempt will be guided by the principles of anti-oppressive (Dominelli, 2002) and transformative social work (Pease & Fook, 1999) practice. I hope that by starting this conversation, more dialogues amongst indigenous social workers will follow as a means of taking what Pease and Fook refer to as "an alternative vision of social work, which allows for the empowering of the individual, community and practitioner" (p. 29). I now discuss how each of the five elements can be engaged with by social workers working in disaster contexts with indigenous peoples.

8.3.1   Meaning

The results of this research show that there are different conceptualisations and responses to disasters amongst indigenous peoples. These varied perspectives are shaped by the equally diverse backgrounds and experiences of the indigenous people. Social work practice on diversity deals with these differences and how these should be considered by social workers in their practice (see Barreto, 2004). In order to understand how this diversity among indigenous peoples can be engaged with in social work practice in disaster contexts with indigenous peoples, it is important to start from understanding how indigenous people perceive disasters. Equally important to this is the understanding of the circumstances that shape these differing perspectives. The following are points that social workers and other DRR actors may need to consider in working with indigenous peoples in the context of disasters relative to meaning:

- Understanding the different backgrounds, experiences and situations in life (e.g., economic, religious, and political) that influence the way they conceptualise disasters. There is a saying that the indigenous *Kankanaey* people use to describe this: "*Bay-am tan say pangawat na iman*." This means that people in one indigenous village may have different ways of constructing meanings. But this saying does not end from there. It encourages others to respect these differing perspectives and understand the reasons behind these. And if these reasons require them to act, such as in responding to economic

needs, then the sustaining practices that were discussed in Chapter Four have to be mobilised as expressions of social justice. This is the debate between ethnocentrism and ethical relativism. It is not about saying only my way or saying it is ok because culture says so – it is about engaging with the complexity of the issue and understanding why any particular practice (and its context) takes place before making a professional assessment/judgement.

- Understanding indigenous people's everyday lives. Indigenous people's daily life builds on their relationships with one another and with nature (Cajete, 2000). Alongside these relationships are the indigenous people's dreams, aspirations, needs and issues that concern their everyday existence. In short, understanding the different meanings that indigenous peoples hold for disasters is translated to the *Kankanaey* saying, "*Awatam adi tan say inyat mi ay natago.*" This means that someone who comes along to live and work with them needs to understand the way they live their lives, including how they practise social justice. This also includes understanding the daily processes of indigenous peoples such as their rituals and other practices as concrete manifestations of social justice.

- Disaster responders also need to reflect on their own backgrounds and experiences and how these influence their practice with indigenous peoples. In the case of the indigenous *Kankanaey*, when asked to respond to a question about how they perceive disasters, they would always turn back on the person who asked them to share their story and say, "*Yan sik-a ngin abe?*" It is a simple question that can be literally translated as: "What about you?" But this question bears deeper questions such as: How do you tell your own story to us about disasters? How different is your story from us? How have you lived your own understanding of disasters? What happens if we do not share the same understanding? How would that affect your work with us? These are questions that DRR actors such as social workers may want to reflect upon in their work with indigenous peoples in disaster contexts.

8.3.2 Context

The context is defined as the setting by which different DRR actors and disaster responders come together. This definition resonates with how the elders define a community, not as a geographical space, but as a form of relationship. In this sense, context intersects with power. With this concept of context as a relationship, it is imperative for social workers working in disaster scenarios with indigenous peoples to consider the indigenous culture itself as the setting. Whilst there is a multitude of things that can be talked about indigenous culture in relation to disasters, I will discuss context with the example of two of the indigenous *Kankanaey* core values. These core values were defined in Chapter Four.

- *Inayan* is a value that can be translated as the fear of the unseen. This guides social workers with their work with indigenous peoples in disaster contexts. There is an acknowledgement that social work can be used by powerful structures such as corporations and authorities to attain their oppressive agenda against indigenous peoples (see Pease & Fook, 1999; Yu, 2006). In the context of disasters, social work and social workers may be used as channels for DRR measures, external relief and humanitarian missions, as well as rebuilding or recovery and rehabilitation efforts. Such was the case of the indigenous social workers and their agencies that were involved in this study. This happened with the relocation of some indigenous *Kankanaey* families in the village of Palina, where the local social welfare office was tasked to coordinate and oversee the entire process of the relocation which, according to those interviewed, was a form of displacement as mining exploration activities took place in these areas that had been declared earlier as risky for human habitation. Being "used" here means that social work and the social workers may not actually be aware of this oppressive agenda of powerful structures such as the state and the corporations that have the power to lobby to governments. The value of *inayan*, aside from the fear of doing something that may be against the common good or the sanctity of someone or something allows one to be critical with one's actions. Social workers working with indigenous peoples in disaster contexts need to be critical over their actions and those of others as these may have the

potential to consummate an oppressive agenda.

- *Paniyew*. *Paniyew* is defined as the act of doing or saying something that desecrates the sanctity of a sacred space. This applies to disaster scenarios with indigenous peoples where social workers need to take note of a number of cultural considerations to ensure that the sanctity of a certain space, place and, most especially, the people's relationships are not desecrated by disaster responses. All too often, disaster responses, specifically during emergencies and rehabilitation do not consider the effects of responses to sacred spaces and relationships. Cultural heritage sites are important things to consider here. As one of the indigenous *Kankanaey* women notes, these cultural heritage sites such as their rice fields are the monuments of their ancestors and sometimes, these are more important in sustaining them as a people than the DRR measures or disaster responses that destroy these.

8.3.3 Power

Power in the context of indigenous peoples and disasters is not confined to the outsiders who come into indigenous communities for DRR responses. It also includes the power within and amongst indigenous peoples themselves. Social workers need to have an understanding of the interplay of power in indigenous communities amongst indigenous peoples and how DRR actors and their relationships with one another may further complicate these.

- Systems of leadership – indigenous villages such as those of the *Kankanaey* often subscribe to two sets of leadership: political structures and those by the traditional elders. In contemporary indigenous *Kankanaey* society, coordination for external support is often done with the local government or political leadership structure. This is usually the only required government protocol to access indigenous communities in disaster contexts. However, it is important for social workers to note that the traditional elders also hold some degree of power and they are so well respected in the villages that, sometimes, government officials and politicians still seek their wisdom, especially in terms of major decision-making processes.

However, this is not also to discount that political leaders and government officials hold so much power in indigenous communities and they can control everything within their jurisdictions, including peoples' voices, access to government benefits and resources. But knowing the other sources of power within the indigenous communities, such as the traditional indigenous leadership, is necessary for external DRR actors. The indigenous leadership structure can leverage any potential conflicts such as exclusion and marginalisation of some sectors or individuals by political leaders in terms of access to resources during disaster events.

- Relationships of people - understanding indigenous peoples' issues and their relationships with one another, which may usher power and power relations, need to go beyond the binaries in issues that they are concerned with. The elders explained this as they deconstructed what they called "the myth of the pro-mining and anti-mining villagers." Understanding an indigenous community and its issues start from understanding the individual circumstances of people and how these influence their perspectives and choices in life. They further explained that in the case of mining, this is a community issue that affects everyone. It is a struggle for everyone expressed in different ways. Social workers working with indigenous peoples need to reflect upon their DRR approaches and projects as these may reinforce community divisions such as those for the "pro-mining" or "anti-mining" groups.

- The so-called "bearers of benevolence" – external actors during disasters such as the different professionals and the agencies they represent are given so much respect for their "benevolence" to the indigenous peoples. They hold the power to dictate and enforce what they want regarding indigenous peoples and their communities. This was discussed in Chapter Seven about development injustices. Given this, it is necessary for social workers to reflect on the privilege that goes with being a "benevolent" figure in indigenous communities during disasters and how this may potentially become oppressive to indigenous peoples.

8.3.4 History

History is important to inform current social work practice with indigenous peoples (Briskman, 2012; Makuau & Mataira, 2013). The elders have also talked about history by referring to oppressive relationships amongst them with others in the past. One of them said, "*We need to look back into the past in order to understand the present and develop a more meaningful relationship in the future. Who would like to repeat the same oppressive history?*" He was referring to their previous experiences with corporations, which has resulted to their current struggles for development aggression. In the context of disasters, history is important in order to learn from people's previous experiences with hazards, including the ways they have responded to these. Doing this may take the following:

- Engaging in story-telling sessions in the villages.

- Indigenous folktales, songs, riddles and proverbs are rich about their history as a people and can detail their experiences with disaster events, including how they have responded to these. Listening and learning how to interpret these or asking someone to interpret these would help a lot in shaping current and future DRR responses with indigenous peoples.

- Indigenous peoples such as the *Kankanaey* have what they call "community museums." There are significant artefacts and objects that families generally keep as heirlooms that would tell stories about their experiences with disasters. Given the necessary rituals and permission of the owners, these owners can tell stories about these artefacts and objects. These artefacts and the stories behind them can be helpful in understanding why indigenous peoples perceive disasters as such and how they have responded to these in the past.

8.3.5 Possibility

The Just Practice Framework and its contextualisation into the indigenous people's practices and processes is the possibility in itself. Social workers need to continue to engage in

exploring more ways further developing this framework in the context of DRR and indigenous peoples. The following recommendations offer initial steps in doing this.

- *Makidad-dad-at ya maki-ngal-ngalat* (Engage in a continuing dialogue) – the elders have always emphasised the value of dialogue and means of understanding one another, including the positions that they take on a certain issue. Therefore, social workers working with indigenous communities in disaster contexts must continue to talk to all members of the community to be able to come up with DRR responses that are reflective of all the diverse perspectives of people in the villages.

- *Makikumpas sin ipugaw* (Build and nurture trust and relationships) Pease and Fook (1999) argue that theory and practice should not actually be taken separately as these influence and support each other. Social work ethics raise the need to separate the personal from the professional. Social work practice with indigenous peoples, specifically in the context of disasters, requires a good relationship amongst them. The elders spoke of many instances by which they have been betrayed by corporations and powerful authorities by promising something but doing otherwise. This includes their experiences by which disaster events have been used to displace them from their lands to pave the way for exploration activities of a mining corporation. This made them suspicious of almost every external support, including those during disasters. Social workers need to be able to build and sustain trust and relationships with indigenous peoples to be able to meaningfully engage in disaster work with them.

- *Maki-es-esa sin panligatan di umili* (Solidarity) – solidarity with indigenous peoples' issues emerges from a trustful relationship. In order to understand the different meanings that indigenous peoples hold about disasters and considering these in disaster responses, social workers are encouraged to build solidarity with indigenous peoples' issues. One of the principles of social work talks about controlled emotional involvement which may be raised as an important factor to reflect upon in terms of building solidarity. But I would argue that a social worker who does not identify with the issues indigenous peoples' struggle for should not be there in the first place. Indigenous peoples conceptualise and

respond to disasters in many different ways. Solidarity does not mean taking a position in any of these differing perspectives but, as the elders have emphasised, it is the capacity to understand the issues behind these differing perspectives and addressing these according to this reflection.

Furthermore, indigenous peoples are more about seeing the manifestations of words into actions. Solidarity needs to be expressed. It is not just about living with them, doing the things they do, eating their food and dressing like them. The elders say that solidarity is about reflecting one's own life – our lifestyles and practices. This is important for social workers to consider and reflect on how their own lives generate, support or dismantle the issues that indigenous peoples face. Thus, starting from oneself could be a small but necessary step towards fully understanding the meanings indigenous peoples hold about disasters and their responses and approaches over these.

8.4 Bringing part one and part two together

TThe indigenous *Kankanaey* elders spoke of a continuing dialogue as a necessary step towards understanding one another and in deconstructing the binaries that have been constructed in the work for DRR and between the relationships of people. They also add that relationships and solidarity build from engaging in meaningful conversations. Indeed, one can observe from their everyday lives that dialogue is necessary in sustaining their relationships and building new ones with outsiders who come into their villages, including those for community development. One of the elders explained that dialogue comes in many ways and takes place in spaces that are meaningful to their everyday lives. I have learned from doing this research that these many ways and processes of dialogue that the elder was referring to do not have to be through a "formal" process like organising and setting up meetings. In order to be meaningful, these dialogues need take place as a part of indigenous people's everyday life. These take place in spaces that are meaningful to their relationships and daily existence. As discussed in Chapter Three, these spaces include their farms, travels and other community institutions such as their evening bonfires. The conversations that take place in these spaces include their stories, chants,

riddles and proverbs. These are powerful spaces of dialogue that convey meaningful insights about indigenous peoples and their lives. These insights provide an understanding of what social justice means for indigenous peoples and how they practise this in their everyday relationships. Then we can be in solidarity with them in achieving that social justice in our work and relationships with them by reflecting this in our own lives, too.

Madison (2005), in her dialogic performance talks, mentioned the construction and reconstruction of meanings by different actors who come together not only to talk but to listen to one another. Conquergood (1982) also maintains that this dialogic performance is a process where people who hold different backgrounds, experiences and perspectives come together and engage in a meaningful conversation to understand one another. In the context of disasters, it is through coming together in these spaces of dialogue and solidarity that social work and other professions can enter into a conversation with indigenous peoples and with themselves to listen and understand how just practice can be applied into indigenous contexts. It is through dialogue that indigenous peoples and those who come to work with them can understand the different meanings they hold about disasters. It is through dialogue that the different actors who come into indigenous communities reflect on their work in relation to how indigenous peoples perceive and live their lives for social justice. It is through dialogue that the dynamics of power within the relationships of those different actors between themselves and in relation to the indigenous community can be negotiated. Furthermore, it is through dialogue that indigenous people's history, including their experiences with previous disasters and the ways they have responded to these, can inform social work's present and future practice with indigenous peoples. Finally, it is through dialogue that indigenous peoples and those who come to help them during disasters can discover possibilities for a just and meaningful social work practice that resonates with the way indigenous peoples practise social justice in their everyday lives.

Dialogues are ordinary and simple steps to deconstruct the binaries that impede the just practice of social work amongst indigenous peoples in disaster contexts. However, as the indigenous *Kankanaey* elders say, "Solidarity with indigenous peoples for social justice starts from reflecting on the way we live our own lives in relation to the struggles of others." To them,

social justice takes off from that little step of dialogue with one's self. Meaning, we can only take action for social justice for others if we are clear about what this means to us and how we live and practise this in relation to others. The work for social justice with indigenous peoples in disaster contexts can be tricky and I speak from my experiences as an indigenous social worker. The desire to confront the issues of injustices that we witness in our everyday lives, which are often amplified by disasters, and the indignation over these, can lead to great yet impulsive leaps that, unfortunately, can make us fall back into the binaries that we wanted to confront. The elders would often caution about taking great and impulsive actions. They believe that a carefully thought action that starts with dialogues can bring more meaningful results than hasty ones. From a conversation with one's self, one can then move into a dialogue with others such as the government, corporations and all other actors in disaster work with indigenous peoples to make sure that disaster responses and approaches are anchored upon the way they live and practise social justice.

Having said all this, I acknowledge that there are times when dialogues may not be enough. Understanding (from a development aggression agenda) may be seen as an expensive and time-consuming commodity when valuable resources are under a community's feet. Beyond these dialogues are more "radical" steps that indigenous peoples have taken for social justice. These include non-violent resistance and directly challenging the status quo. The continuing struggles of indigenous peoples in the Philippines have led them to peaceful rallies and demonstrations as a form of resistance. This is not a call to arms but it recognises that capitalist interests and agendas are powerful forces that will resist change. As a concluding statement, social workers need to recognise that the human rights agenda is inseparable from this kind of work (see Ife, 2001; Ife & Fiske, 2006; Ife, 2012, 2013; Morley & Ife, 2002).

8.5 Conclusion

The social justice framework offers the possibility for social work to contribute in deconstructing binaries that impede a just and meaningful DRR with indigenous peoples such as those between indigenous and scientific knowledge. At the same time, it also offers the

opportunity for social work and social workers to reflect and deconstruct its perspectives and practices that may hinder the path for a socially just and meaningful DRR with indigenous peoples. As a profession that is committed to the recognition of people's capacities and building its responses and approaches from these, social work needs to build on indigenous people's existing ways of life and how this might be engaged with in disaster scenarios. Thus, the attempt to contextualise the five themes of just practice on indigenous people's practice of social justice in their everyday lives. Recommendations were formulated for social workers and other professional working for DRR with indigenous peoples. The chapter ends with a reflection on the significance of dialogues as small but necessary steps in attaining a socially just and meaningful DRR with indigenous peoples.

Chapter 9

Towards a Just and Meaningful DRR with Indigenous Peoples

9.1 Introduction

The bonfire starts to glow, and people are gathering around it. The children are catching beetles and fireflies which have been attracted to the bonfire. Then, the elders and community leaders arrive. The villagers are now seated around the bonfire eager to hear someone narrate their stories. We greet each other, and the women start serving coffee and rice cakes to everyone. Then, I am asked to tell the whole story of my study. How am I going to do this? Before I had left my research sites, I made a commitment to return to these indigenous *Kankanaey* villages and sit with them once again at their bonfire sessions and narrate their stories the way I had written them in my study. As I conclude this thesis, I thought that reflecting on how I was going to tell this story to the people who own them would help to bring all the bits and pieces of the different chapters together. This chapter draws from the discussions and recommendations in Chapter Eight. It builds on the issues of oppression and injustices in disasters bringing all the chapters together. It also includes a final reflection about the binaries that hinder meaningful practice of social justice in disaster contexts with indigenous peoples. To reflect on social justice as a way of life, social work is presented at the heart of this possibility. This chapter concludes

with some practical contributions and limitations of the study at large.

9.2   Looking Back: Disasters and indigenous peoples

The *Kankanaey* bonfires, as discussed previously in this study, were a powerful space of dialogue and an expression of solidarity. Reading this thesis is just like being present at a *Kankanaey* bonfire, where their stories were narrated by a *Kankanaey* PhD student. Just like at the real bonfire sessions, the reactions and critiques from the participants have been taken in as points for a continuing dialogue to improve future research. They are also seen as expressions of solidarity to indigenous people's issues and struggles. The purpose of the bonfire sessions was to dialogue on an important topic and draw out, not only the wisdom and insights that come up from these, but also point out the errors and gaps in the stories so they could be corrected or clarified. Doing this makes sure that the knowledge that is passed down to the next generation is not distorted but, rather, captures the authenticity of the stories as told by the owners of those narratives. Therefore, the reactions and critiques from those who read this thesis will benefit the agenda for a more meaningful way of working with indigenous peoples in disaster contexts. Looking back, I narrate the different stories of the indigenous *Kankanaey* people about disasters according to how we journeyed together in this study and built landmarks where we had to stay long to grapple for a common understanding of a certain issue, concept or practice in DRR.

This study is about disasters through an indigenous people's lens in the Philippines. It provides that indigenous peoples such as the *Kankanaey* have varied constructs about disasters. Early on, I felt certain as I watched the analysis of my research unfold, that there were varied concepts and perspectives on disasters amongst the indigenous *Kankanaey*. Then I began to ask a question: Are we not supposed to have a common perspective about disasters as indigenous *Kankanaey* people? I looked back to my indigenous village to reflect on my question. There were images of the elders surrounding the bonfires, telling me stories until early dawn. There were the university students and young professionals who passionately engaged in their group discussions in the community consultations. There were also the women who cooked with me and taught me how to catch tadpoles along the rivers while they told me the stories of survival

they had either experienced or heard from their mothers. There were the community leaders and local government officials. Some of them gave me company from one village to another in the conduct of the community consultations. And there was me, an indigenous *Kankanaey* social worker and PhD student doing research in her own community. I saw an indigenous *Kankanaey* village comprised of a multitude of people with different backgrounds and experiences. The constructionist approach explains that the different construction of meanings are shaped by people's experiences, background and relationships (Holstein & Gubrium, 2013).

Indeed, these *Kankanaey* people who participated in my study have diverse backgrounds and experiences that have shaped the way they conceptualise disasters. Critical ethnography provides that the construction and interpretation of meanings may be accompanied by oppressive relationships and practices, and therefore needs to be challenged (Madison, 2005). My study took off from this point to a path that went beyond telling the views and practices of the *Kankanaey* people in relation to how they lived and responded to disasters as another "exotic" indigenous story. It took so much inspiration from Smith's (2012) Decolonizing Methodologies, albeit with the acknowledgement of the risk of further contributing to the othering of indigenous peoples. From this perspective, disasters through an indigenous lens in the Philippines offers a window to gaze back into history as a critical backdrop in engaging further with the stories of the indigenous *Kankanaey* people about their everyday lives and their experiences. This history, as the elders have said, include vignettes of their life-giving experiences in sustaining one another and how this relationship serves as the foundation for their responses to disasters. Disasters through an indigenous lens in the Philippines also offers a history of their relationships with outsiders and how these have changed the landscape of indigenous people's ways of life and survival in relation to disasters. This history is narrated in the section that follows.

9.2.1 Disasters: A historical grounding

Besides looking back at how indigenous peoples have lived their lives in harmony with nature and with one another, including major natural hazards, the historical grounding on the

agenda of colonisation and conquest are important as frameworks of dialogue for understanding indigenous people's perspectives about disasters. The indigenous *Kankanaey* people took their narratives of this history from their search for meaning and translation of disasters as an English term into their local language. A *Kankanaey* myself, I began to reflect on why it is hard to find an exact translation of the term. But I was confident that the elders or the community leaders and local officials would soon find the *Kankanaey* term for disasters. All throughout our dialogues in the research process, we tried to draw the closest terms to translate it. But our search for that *Kankanaey* term for disasters drew us closer to a translation for natural hazards instead.

Then it was time to look back to the past and reflect on how disasters as an English term was introduced to us in the first place. The elders' accounts about their experiences with formal education under American colonial rule opened the path into journeying further to define or translate disasters into the *Kankanaey* language. Alongside the elders' stories are Philippine indigenous literatures (see Bagamaspad et al., 1985) and Philippine linguistic studies (Bernardo, 2004; Bolton and Bautista, 2008) that have been instrumental in explaining why it was so hard to translate "disasters" into local languages. These literatures have also helped in drawing out a narrative about the time when indigenous *Kankanaey* people started using the term "disasters" both in formal education and in conventional conversations.

Understanding disasters through an indigenous lens thus leads us back to the colonial period, where indigenous children were taught the English alphabet by American teachers using objects and materials that were not familiar to them. As such, Philippine indigenous peoples' studies such as Bagamaspad et al. (1985) and Razon and Hensman (1976) point out the conditioning of indigenous peoples to be eventually assimilated into American ways of life by infusing their daily lessons with colonising terms for indigenous children to learn and memorise. One of the elders narrated how he had to memorise and recite the English alphabet with the associated objects such Apple for the letter A and Zebra for the letter Z. As mentioned in Chapter Five, these objects do not exist in the Philippines. Pineda-Tinio (2002) adds that, eventually, the Filipino children were memorising and reciting the pledge of allegiance to the American flag.

One of the community leaders said that going back through this history does not intend to single out America as the only colonial master of the Philippines. The Philippines traces a long history of colonisation from the start of the Spanish occupation which lasted for four centuries. Those long years of colonisation were also marred by exploitative, oppressive and abusive relationships that remain a part of the predatory and authoritarian regime of the Philippine government at present (see Quimpo, 2009). But, in this particular narrative, it was only up until the American colonial times that the indigenous *Kankanaey* elders have been able to trace back their search in understanding how they have ended up using the term "disasters" in their villages. As early historians and anthropologists claim, it was the Americans who had successfully colonised the indigenous peoples in the Cordillera region (Scott, 1979). The *Kankanaey* elders' narratives affirm this claim with their stories as they can only recall through oral accounts their history of colonisation up until the American period.

For local officials and some community leaders, the use of "disasters" as an English term came about in the early 1990s. Therefore, to them, it cannot be said that these were taught as a part of the American alphabet as was the case in Apples and Zebras. However, it is important to consider what Bernardo (2004) mentions as the continuing colonial education system in the Philippines, which remains alive in the present. One of the community leaders goes even further in his reflection by saying that disasters may just be like the other English terms in the alphabet that are essential to learn before one can be considered educated. He was talking about this in the context of the mass Americanisation of indigenous peoples, where, as Bernardo (2004) points out, to be educated means to speak the same language as the colonisers. Therefore, to this community leader, to use disasters as an English term is an expression of being educated in a socially sanctioned way. The elders talked about Western education openly and passionately as they said that seeing their children become professionals brought them both joy and pride. However, they emphasised that education must never be used to benefit a personal agenda at the expense of others.

Disasters, through an indigenous lens, provide a link between the naming of disasters as such and the history of colonisation for indigenous peoples. Fanon (1967) raises a critical point

about the power of language to colonise, which is essential in understanding the relationship of history in the use and promotion of disasters as an English term. This colonising power of language has become quite embedded in the current government and NGO systems in the Philippines, and this has manifested in the promotion of disasters as an English term in their policies, projects and programmes on DRR. Using Blaut's (1993) term, this colonising agenda continues to "diffuse" into what the West had referred as the "peripheries," including indigenous people's villages. This is also seen in the formal education system in the Philippines. The Apples and Zebras are still used at present to teach the alphabet to indigenous children. Disasters, as the students and young professionals claimed, is a term that they learned from school. To quote one of them, "It was in school that I first heard about disasters. I was taught that disasters can either be man-made or natural." Community leaders added that other external factors such as the media have also promoted the term disasters to describe natural hazards such as typhoons, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions.

Yet alongside this colonising agenda is the emergence of differing perspectives about disasters amongst indigenous *Kankanaey* people. The elders spoke about the hazards of everyday life, including the challenges they face with development aggression focused on mining, instead of disasters. They also maintained that natural hazards are a part of everyday life and that there are corresponding knowledges and capacities that can be used in response to these. Others in the community, such as women and community leaders, supported these narratives by reinforcing that development aggression posed the greatest threat to their everyday lives. This conceptualisation was likewise affirmed in community consultations in all three villages, where mining ranked first amongst all other forms of hazards that participants listed. When these lists were presented to the council of elders in the NCIP-facilitated consultation, representatives of the village-based people's organisations also agreed with the ranking of the identified hazards. Meanwhile, the students and young professionals, whilst agreeing with mining as a form of everyday hazard for indigenous *Kankanaey* people, defined disasters as either "man-made or natural." Participants from government agencies and NGOs expressed recognition of different conceptualisations of disasters amongst indigenous *Kankanaey*. However, they also acknowledged that other perspectives outside of these also needed to be considered, such as

those by international governing bodies and outsiders who come to work with indigenous peoples for DRR.

Understanding disasters through an indigenous lens emphasises that beyond these differing perspectives on disasters is a fact that defies the myth of indigenous peoples' vulnerabilities to natural hazards. Inherent in the stories of indigenous *Kankanaey*, are a wealth of local capacities and sustaining practices that have become part of their everyday lives and expressed in their relationships with one another. As one of the elders notes, these capacities and sustaining practices may even become more apparent in times of need, such as during disasters. These local capacities include indigenous knowledge that continues to evolve alongside the changes that take place within their communities. It is also worth mentioning here the local women's stories of the availability of resources that can be gathered from their natural environment, which has been central to the survival of indigenous *Kankanaey* in the past and up to the present. However, as evidenced by the narratives of participants from government agencies, NGOs and corporations, institutional responses neglect these local capacities and strengths and continue to force technocratic DRR responses and approaches upon indigenous peoples. A discussion on disasters and power will further explain the imposition of these technocratic responses and approaches to DRR upon indigenous peoples by powerful structures.

9.2.2 Disasters and power

Understanding disasters through an indigenous lens offers a framework for reflecting upon how disasters can be used to benefit those in power. Hewitt (1983, 1995) offers an important analysis on how disasters are framed as extreme forces of nature that need highly advanced solutions as responses. Therefore, those who are not capable of accessing these technological solutions, such as indigenous peoples, have to rely on the "benevolence" of powerful structures such as governments and corporations to survive these extreme forces of nature. The *Kankanaey* local officials and community leaders have articulated what they believed to be an increasing "fury of nature" that is beyond their capacity to respond to. Alongside this perception is their acknowledgement that they encourage support from external institutions such as international

agencies and corporations specifically for advanced technologies that address what is largely believed by contemporary *Kankanaey* to be "natural disasters."

Kankanaey elders acknowledge the need for the continuity of wisdom cultivation and sharing amongst their communities in order to improve resilience to natural hazards. However, they emphasise that their recognition of outsiders' support must not be taken advantage of in order to impose a hidden agenda upon indigenous peoples. This is particularly relevant as the *Kankanaey* people have seen how disaster events have been used to leverage and justify the agendas of extractive industries in their villages, with the most notable example being mining. Here, it is claimed that associated profits are used to assist vulnerable groups; however, this is often far more substantiated in rhetoric rather than reality. Such is the case of development projects amongst indigenous peoples that continue to perpetuate the agenda of colonisation and Western hegemony. Alongside the issues of oppression that are inherent in the practice of Western development, there are the associated disaster risks and their social cost to the relationships of indigenous people within their communities. The elders and community leaders have said over and over again that indigenous people's collective resilience to disasters emanate from their relationships with one another.

Disasters through an indigenous lens also provides a window to reflect upon the power dynamics behind the use of terminologies to justify particular policy positions and the justification for things such as development aggressions. International laws and frameworks provide a definition of disasters as discussed in Chapters One and Two. In this research, the participants have used the term "disasters" from varied understandings and from their positions of power in society. The traditional indigenous perspectives refer to disasters as the everyday manifestations of oppressions such as those that they experience with development aggressions, particularly mining and logging. Whilst the contemporary indigenous perspectives articulated respect to the traditional indigenous conceptualizations of disasters, these perspectives reflect that their understanding of disasters is equated to natural hazards; thus, their use of the terms "natural disasters." Interestingly, the traditional indigenous perspectives regard natural hazards as natural processes that are a part of their everyday life.

Terminologies and languages used in DRR have to be critically engaged as language can be potentially used as a tool to perpetuate powerful agendas. For instance, the use of the term "natural disasters" by the mining corporations reinforced the notion on disasters as extreme forces of nature that require scientific solutions, and therefore justifies their presence and operation in indigenous lands as institutions that are capable of providing these "needed" technocratic responses to indigenous peoples who do not have the capacity to access these resources. This is similarly reflected in the responses of organisations, which amplified the scientific perspectives by equating natural hazards to disasters, which need technocratic responses and approaches that are often derived from outsiders.

Disasters, through an indigenous lens, challenge this oppressive theory and practice of Western development. Whilst indigenous peoples may be offered alternatives such as "sustainable development" and "responsible mining," these harbour the same oppressive and exploitative practices that are inherent in the theory and practice of development. Therefore, these forms of alternatives also need to be critically examined. This is what my study strives to attain as it explores the ways by which the Just Practice Framework in social work can be used to dismantle the binary that has been created between indigenous and scientific knowledge in DRR. Recommendations were then drawn from the discussions of this binary for social workers and other professionals who might be doing disaster work with indigenous peoples.

As a Western framework, my study attempted to contextualise this Just Practice Framework according to how indigenous peoples, such as the *Kankanaey*, live and practise social justice not only during disaster events but also in their everyday lives. By doing this, disasters through the lens of indigenous peoples further deconstructs the binary between the Western/non-Western divide and its implications for DRR practice with indigenous peoples. At this point, I looked back into my research and reflected on all the binaries that have come out of the process. These binaries are also quite often heard in formal discourses and conventional dialogues about indigenous peoples and disasters. All too often, people are not aware of the implications of these binaries to the attainment of a just and meaningful DRR – not only for indigenous peoples but for everyone. I discuss these binaries in the section that follows.

9.2.3   The binaries in this research

Talking about social justice and the importance of deconstructing the binaries that impede its full realisation in disaster contexts with indigenous peoples, I was drawn into an awareness of the different binaries that emerged in my research. The stories and experiences of the indigenous *Kankanaey* people emphasise that, when these binaries are recognised and addressed, DRR practice can become truly liberating, empowering and meaningful. The following are the binaries that emerged in my research, in no particular order:

- Insider/outsider

  My experience in doing this insider research revealed that, at some point in our lives, we will always be considered either insiders or outsiders. It points further to the fact that working with indigenous peoples for DRR is built not on the basis of being an insider/outsider, but on the authenticity of the relationship and the trust that is forged between them. Moreover, stories of the elders as well as the community leaders show the necessity of insiders and outsiders to work collaboratively for a common purpose to search for ways of developing better responses and approaches to disasters.

- Indigenous/non-indigenous

  A striking story about the indigenous/non-indigenous divide was one of the young professionals who shared that she never realised that she was an indigenous person until someone told her about it. To her, she was just another human being like anybody else. The *Kankanaey* elders' stories about their concepts of a "community", "solidarity," and most of all, "coexistence," point to the fact that indigenous/non-indigenous exist alongside each other. As one of these elders further explained, "*the same sun lights our path and the same moon looks down on us.*"

- Indigenous knowledge/scientific knowledge

  The dichotomy between indigenous and scientific knowledge proved to have only further disenfranchised the already marginalised. The statement of the elders that indigenous knowledge is an evolving wisdom, developing over time, is an expression of both forms

of knowledge working together to improve disaster responses. Also, the everyday lives of indigenous *Kankanaey* people is a testament that both indigenous and scientific knowledge are being utilised to build indigenous peoples' resilience to disasters.

- Traditional/modern approaches

  Traditional/modern approaches relate to the dichotomy of indigenous knowledge/scientific knowledge. The traditional/modern binary is largely used by participants from government agencies and NGOs to discuss not only DRR but development approaches in general. Just like scientific knowledge and indigenous knowledge, all forms of approach need to be recognised and when necessary, these have to be brought together to facilitate better DRR responses for the attainment of the common good. There are always lessons to be learned from both traditional and modern practices that can be applied to benefit those whom DRR efforts are geared towards.

- Formal/conventional dialogues

  Once again, the indigenous *Kankanaey* elders and community leaders, as well as local officials, argue that all forms and means of dialogue are important for understanding one another. They add that it does not matter where these dialogues take place, how long they go for, and how sophisticated or simple the process might be. What is important, according to the elders, is that people keep talking to one another and continue to foster a better understanding of the circumstances surrounding each other's perspective–thereby creating appropriate and meaningful responses to disasters in indigenous peoples' contexts.

- Elders/young people

  There is a common notion that elders and young people cannot meet in terms of their perspectives and ways of life. But in relation to dialogues, I have observed that the *Kankanaey* elders and youth can indeed come together and meaningfully engage in a discussion. I have seen this happen many times at the bonfire sessions and community consultations, where the elders and the young people came together, talked to each other,

listened to each other's stories and drew lessons and insights from these. These were all necessary in understanding disasters according to indigenous peoples' perspectives. In fact, the spaces of dialogue in the indigenous *Kankanaey* villages, such as the bonfires, exist as a venue for elders and young people to come together for the construction and transmission of knowledge. Both the elders and the young have capacities to contribute in building and strengthening their community's resilience to disasters.

9.3   Final reflection: Window into an awareness of the binaries

I draw my final reflections from the discussions of these binaries as I go back to the statements I made in the introduction to this research: that there is more to social work in DRR than merely being framed around relief and humanitarian work. Indeed, the liberating and transformative roles of social work in DRR consistently emerged within this study. These roles seek to address issues of injustice, such as the differentiations between indigenous/non-indigenous that only impede the full realisation of a socially just DRR. Yet, I acknowledge that, as an indigenous *Kankanaey* social worker, it took a process of inner dialogue and critical discourse to be able to see the meaning of social justice in working beyond the binaries. When we live the oppressions and injustices, it can be challenging to step back from that oppressive world and recognise the binary logic that is contributing to these oppressions and injustices in the first place. I remember a former professor who once told me that anger towards the injustices is just. But she also reminded me that emotions can lead to uncritical thoughts and actions. Yes, I was angry at the injustices I have witnessed, and I have unconsciously created and reinforced the binary between good and bad with that anger. Indeed, this was where I started with my PhD journey. But I have moved beyond where I was before, and this is where I am now – a social worker who is able to see both sides of the story through an indigenous lens that values peaceful and meaningful dialogues as necessary steps towards understanding one another. As the elders say, all too often impulsive actions that are not carefully reflected upon can easily make us fall back into the binaries and reinforce injustices instead of addressing them.

As a final reflection, I go back to the introduction about the metaphor of the indigenous *Kankanaey* dance and the process of becoming. There, I mentioned that I still get lost in the rhythm of the indigenous dance. But the *Kankanaey* women who continue to teach me how to do it say that it is okay to get lost in the rhythm of the dance. In fact, they say that anyone, including them, sometimes gets lost with their steps. However, it is in getting lost that I strive to seek more ways of learning how to do it. Indeed, it was in getting lost with my anger about the oppression and exploitation of my own people that led me to discovering my path as an indigenous *Kankanaey* social worker dedicated to social justice frameworks for practice; one that seeks to deconstruct the binaries that hinder just and meaningful work with indigenous peoples for DRR. I will discuss in the section that follows how social work, with all its imperfections, can strive to take a central role in a just and meaningful DRR with indigenous peoples.

9.4 Social work at the heart of a socially just and meaningful DRR

Understanding disasters through the lens of indigenous peoples encourages one to take action for attaining a just and meaningful DRR. As the *Kankanaey* elders note, social justice is not simply a concept. Rather, it is a way of life – it is lived and practised. Drawing from this statement by the elders, social work as a profession needs to take action and go beyond its welfare-based approach (see Briskman, 2014) to embrace more of its liberating (Dominelli & Campling, 2002) and transformative roles (Fook, 2003; Pease, 2016) in its DRR practice with indigenous peoples. Social work can confront the binaries mentioned earlier by taking a central role in bringing together its DRR practice with indigenous peoples whilst at the same time ensuring that issues of power are recognised and addressed along the process. In doing so, social work affirms its commitment to social justice and human as its foundational purpose (Ife, 2001, 2012; Irizarry et al., 2016; Pease, 2016).

The following diagram (Figure 9.1) presents how this might be possible. It shows social work at the heart of a socially just and meaningful DRR with indigenous peoples. The diagram

shows that, firstly, disasters are shaped by both indigenous and scientific knowledge. Social work must therefore be able to bring these two forms of knowledge together for a holistic and inclusive DRR practice with indigenous peoples. Secondly, social work must be able to bring together disaster studies and indigenous studies. Thirdly, social work must be able to put together outsiders' and insiders' actions for DRR. Finally, indigenous and disaster studies also need to inform social work theory and practice. These three fields need to interact. This framework deconstructs the binaries that were discussed earlier and facilitates a more just and empowering DRR with indigenous peoples.
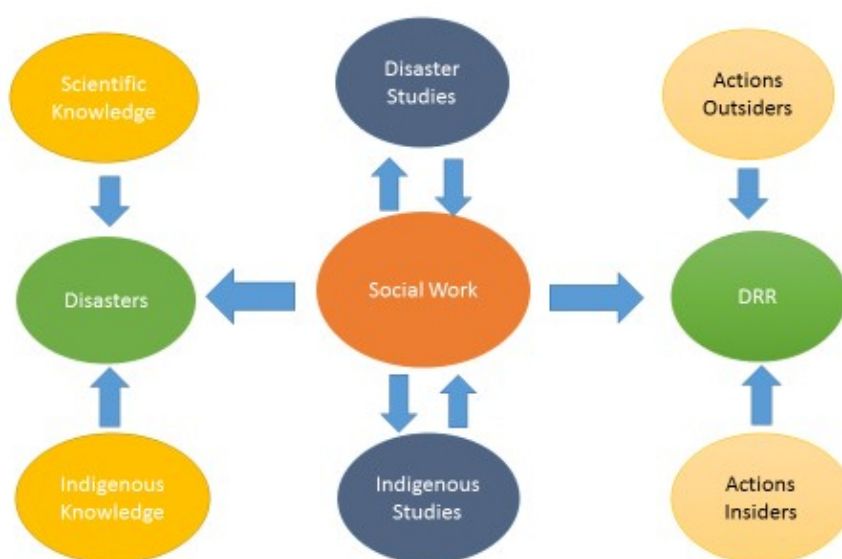
Figure 9.1: Social work at the heart of a just and meaningful DRR with indigenous peoples.

9.5   Contributions of the study to DRR, social work and indigenous theory building

In congruence with the overall purpose of critical ethnography to address issues of oppression in human relationships, this study offers a framework for realising a social justice informed DRR practice with indigenous peoples. It is said that policies and programmes on DRR for indigenous peoples are often top-down led and, whilst indigenous peoples are being "recognised" in these frameworks, these are often in a tokenistic fashion. This study provides recommendations on how indigenous peoples and DRR actors can be engaged in critical dialogues so that their issues are meaningfully recognised in DRR policies and

programmes. This challenges the normative institutional responses to DRR and provides better ways forward for inclusive community development practice in disaster contexts. The Just Practice Framework provides a basis for social workers and other practitioners to critically evaluate DRR practice rather than to prescriptively implement it.

In terms of methodology, this study provides some ways of doing an insider critical ethnography on disasters and indigenous peoples. It provides insights about ethics in practice as well as negotiating multiple roles – e.g., an insider indigenous *Kankanaey*, social worker and DRR scholar. This multiplicity of roles in doing critical ethnography requires a commitment to responding to everyday lives, albeit with the constant awareness and practice of reflexivity in research. Furthermore, doing an insider critical ethnography offers ways of working with relational complexities especially as multiple roles emerge in certain scenarios and situations. Finally, an insider critical ethnography allows one to appreciate the need to embrace different rhythms of fieldwork.

This research was built on the inspiration drawn from indigenous theories such as those by Tuhiwai-Smith (2012) and Bishop (1999). Whilst these indigenous research and theories provided an overall foundation for doing research with indigenous peoples, the stories drawn from the indigenous *Kankanaey* people's experiences with colonization in the context of development aggressions are offered in this thesis. This provides a context-specific framework not only for indigenous research but also for engaging in community development work, which is important in social work theory and practice. The thesis further contributes to indigenous scholarship and social work theory and practice with its emphasis on relational approaches, linguistic and cultural translations, negotiating community politics, and intersectionality as essential elements of doing research and development work with indigenous peoples.

9.6 Limitations and further research

This study was conducted amongst the indigenous *Kankanaey* people in three villages in the municipality of Kibungan in Benguet. As mentioned previously in the context of the study, the *Kankanaey* people are found in the Mountain and Benguet provinces of the

northern Philippines. The results of the research reflect that the indigenous *Kankanaey* in the three villages where the research was conducted had varied perspectives about disasters. Therefore, this study does not claim to represent the perspectives of all *Kankanaey* people in the Cordillera region about disasters. Furthermore, the research was conducted in three villages in the municipality of Kibungan. The municipality has seven villages. The selection of these field sites was on the basis of their experiences with the different stages of mining: operation and abandonment, exploration, and application. Because of the villagers' ongoing resistance to mining operations, these villages have been declared "Sites of Struggle" by the Philippine Misereor Partnerships, Inc., a national network of NGOs and people's organisations. Given this, I acknowledge that the results of this research are not reflective of the overall perspectives of indigenous *Kankanaey* in Kibungan. The same research conducted in other villages of the municipality, ones that did not have any direct experiences or struggles from mining may indeed present a different result.

Moreover, assuming that this study is the first insider critical ethnography amongst indigenous *Kankanaey* to understand indigenous perspectives about disasters, I acknowledge that there are areas that need to be studied further. Having said this, I would like to emphasise once again that I encourage further research on this topic to critique this study. Doing so will help achieve the purpose of finding better ways to increase indigenous people's resilience to disasters in processes that are meaningful and socially just to everyone. Finally, critical ethnography has been very useful in guiding the entire process of this research. Any further development of critical ethnography is therefore encouraged, especially in the indigenous and disasters context. This research seeks to build a "bonfire" where conversations on indigenous peoples and disasters by insiders shall continue to take place.

Figure 9.2: A bonfire that is starting to glow: Photo by Charleston Pasigon (used with permission).

Appendices

Appendix A

Ethics Approval

Office of the Vice-Chancellor
Finance, Ehtics and Compliance

The University of Auckland
Private Bag 92019
Auckland, New Zealand

Level 10, 49 Symonds Street
Telephone: 64 9 373 7599
Extension: 87830 / 83761
Facsimile: 64 9 373 7432

UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE (UAHPEC)

24-Nov-2015

MEMORANDUM TO:

Dr Jay Marlowe
Education Faculty Admin

Re: Application for Ethics Approval (Our Ref. 016231): Approved with comment

The Committee considered your application for ethics approval for your project entitled Disasters through an Indigenous Lens in the Philippines .

Ethics approval was given for a period of three years with the following comment(s):

1. PIS and CF Organisation Participants
a. Please provide a timeframe for the return of revised transcripts to the researcher. Typically this timeframe is tied to the receipt of the transcript (ie. two weeks after the receipt).
2. PISs
a. The Committee does not encourage use of personal mobile phone numbers for recruitment purposes unless it is a phone dedicated to this research study.

The expiry date for this approval is 24-Nov-2018.

If the project changes significantly you are required to resubmit a new application to UAHPEC for further consideration.

In order that an up-to-date record can be maintained, you are requested to notify UAHPEC once your project is completed.

The Chair and the members of UAHPEC would be happy to discuss general matters relating to ethics approvals if you wish to do so. Contact should be made through the UAHPEC Ethics Administrators at ro-ethics@auckland.ac.nz in the first instance.

All communication with the UAHPEC regarding this application should include this reference number: 016231.

(This is a computer generated letter. No signature required.)

Secretary
University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee

c.c. Head of Department / School, Education Faculty Admin
Jean-Christophe Gaillard
Ms Marjorie Balay-As

Additional information:
1. Should you need to make any changes to the project, write to the Committee giving full details including revised documentation.

2. Should you require an extension, write to the Committee before the expiry date giving full details along with revised documentation. An extension can be granted for up to three years, after which time you must make a new application.

3. At the end of three years, or if the project is completed before the expiry, you are requested to advise the Committee of its completion.

4. Do not forget to fill in the 'approval wording' on the Participant Information Sheets and Consent Forms, giving the dates of approval and the reference number, before you send them out to your participants.

5. Send a copy of this approval letter to the Awards Team at the, Research Office if you have obtained funding other than from UniServices. For UniServices contract, send a copy of the approval letter to: Contract Manager, UniServices.

6. Please note that the Committee may from time to time conduct audits of approved projects to ensure that the research has been carried out according to the approval that was given.

Appendix B

Consent Forms

THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND
NEW ZEALAND
Te Whare Wānanga o Tāmaki Makaurau

School of Counselling, Human Services and Social Work
Main Reception, A Block, Gate 3
74 Epsom Avenue, Epsom
Phone: 09-623 8899

The University of Auckland
Private Bag 92019
Auckland 1142, New Zealand

Consent Form [Heads of Agency: Interviews]

THIS FORM WILL BE STORED SAFELY FOR SIX YEARS

Project title: **Disasters through an Indigenous Lens in the Philippines**

Name of Researcher: Marjorie M. Balay-As

If you agree to provide consent for employees of the organisation you work for to participate in the research project as described in the Participant Information Sheet, please complete this form. This consent form and information gained from the study will be held in a secure cabinet at The University of Auckland for 6 years.

I …….……………… (write your name here)

Hereby provide consent for you to conduct individual interviews with employees from my organisation as requested in the research project mentioned in this form.

I acknowledge that I have read the information provided in the Participant Information Sheet and acknowledge the following:

- I have read and understood an explanation of this research project.
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions and have them answered.
- I understand that my staff will receive a summary of the research findings if desired.
- I understand that interviews are expected to take approximately 1 hour of my staff's time.
- Also, I understand that if I wish I will receive a summary of the research findings upon the completion of this study, and that the information given will be kept in a secure place at The University of Auckland for a period of six years after the research is completed, after which it will be destroyed.
- My staff's participation in this research will be voluntary.
- I permit my staff to take part in this study during work hours.
- Participation or non-participation in this research will not affect my relationship with my staff or their employment status.
- I understand that I will not be provided any information as to the identity of my staff who will be participating to this research.

Please provide an email address if you want a copy of the summary of findings…………………………………………………………………

Signed: _____

Date: _____

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE for (3) years on_____, Reference Number _____.

School of Counselling, Human Services and Social Work
Main Reception, A Block, Gate 3
74 Epsom Avenue, Epsom
Phone: 09-623 8899

**The University of Auckland
Private Bag 92019
Auckland 1142, New Zealand**

Consent Form [Participants from Organisations: Interviews]

THIS FORM WILL BE STORED SAFELY FOR SIX YEARS

Project title: **Disasters through an Indigenous Lens in the Philippines**

Name of Researcher: Marjorie M. Balay-As

Please complete this form if you agree to participate in the research discussed in the Participant Information Sheet (PIS). This consent form and information gained from the study will be held in a secure place at the University of Auckland for 6 years.

I …………………………………………………………………………………………………….………… (write your name here)

Hereby provide consent to participate in an individual interview as requested in the research project mentioned in this form.

I acknowledge that I have read the information provided in the Participant Information Sheet (PIS) and acknowledge the following:

- I have read and understand the purpose of this research project.
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions and have them answered.
- I understand that I may withdraw myself and any information traceable to me from the interviewer any time within three months from the date of the interview.
- I understand that if I do decide to withdraw from this study, I will not have to provide a reason, and if I choose, any information pertaining to myself will be destroyed.
- I understand that my local chief executive/director/manager has agreed that his/her staff can participate in the interview.
- I understand that withdrawal or participation in this study will not affect my employment status or relationships with my employer.
- I understand that if I wish I will receive a summary of the research findings upon completion of this study and that the information given will be kept in a secure place for a period of six years after the research is completed, after which it will be destroyed.
- I agree to take part in this research.
- I agree/do not agree that notes and/or audio recording will be taken down from the interview.
- I understand that I will not be identifiable in any form of written and oral presentations of this research.
- I do/do not request a copy of the interview transcript.
- I would/would not like a summary of the thesis findings to be sent to me by email.

Please provide an email address if you want a copy of the summary of findings…………………………………………………………………………..

Signed: _____

Date: _____

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE for (3) years on _____, Reference Number_____.

THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND
NEW ZEALAND
Te Whare Wānanga o Tāmaki Makaurau

<div align="right">

School of Counselling, Human Services and Social Work
Main Reception, A Block, Gate 3
74 Epsom Avenue, Epsom
Phone: 09-623 8899

The University of Auckland
Private Bag 92019
Auckland 1142, New Zealand

</div>

Consent Form [Community Participants: Interviews]

THIS FORM WILL BE STORED SAFELY FOR SIX YEARS

Project title: **Disasters through an Indigenous Lens in the Philippines**

Name of Researcher: Marjorie M. Balay-As

Note: Consent Forms will not be provided to the community participants since it is culturally inappropriate to have them provide a written consent/or sign a document. This form will be used as a guide in generating the oral consent that will be audio-recorded.

I …………………………………………………………………….………………………………………………………..…………… (mention your name)

Hereby provide consent to participate in an individual interview as discussed with me. I acknowledge that the information in the Participant Information Sheet were discussed with me and I acknowledge the following:

- I understand the purpose of this research project.
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions and have them answered.
- I understand that I may withdraw myself and any information traceable to me from the interviewer any time within 8 weeks from the date of the interview.
- I understand that if I do decide to withdraw from this study, I will not have to provide a reason, and if I choose, any information pertaining to myself will be destroyed.
- I understand that a validation meeting where I can affirm or correct the information given will take place before the results of the research will be finalized.
- I understand that the information given will be kept in a secure place for a period of six years after the research is completed, after which it will be destroyed.
- I agree to take part in this research and that my participation does not have anything to do with any special relationship with the researcher.
- I understand that the interview/chants will be recorded but I can choose to have this turned off at any time during the conversation or not to be recorded at all.
- I do/do not need the transcript of the interviews to be read to me.

Please provide an email address if you want a summary of the findings _____.

Date: _____

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE for (3) years on_____, Reference Number _____.

Appendix C

Participant Information Sheet

School of Counselling, Human Services and Social Work
Main Reception, A Block, Gate 3
74 Epsom Avenue, Epsom
Phone: 09-623 8899

The University of Auckland
Private Bag 92019
Auckland 1142, New Zealand

Participant Information Sheet [Interviews]

Heads of Agency

Date: ……………………

Project title: Disasters through and Indigenous Lens in the Philippines

My name is Marjorie Balay-As. I am a student at The University of Auckland, enrolled in a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Degree in the School of Counselling, Human Services and Social Work. I am conducting a research project that focuses on understanding disasters through indigenous perspectives and how these perceptions impact on community development, particularly on disaster risk reduction (DRR) policies and program/project implementation. I would like to ask if your office/organisation would consider being a participant to this research.

Local perspectives are important in responding to disasters and your insights to this topic as an organisation that works with the indigenous Kankanaey would certainly be helpful. The study will draw responses that will inform the formulation and implementation of relevant policies and programs on DRR and will look to inform the practice of community development among indigenous peoples. The study also involves interviews with community members to obtain diverse perspectives on disasters that will provide a comprehensive and contextual approach to DRR. Information gathered from this study will be used to complete my PhD degree and for future possible publications and conference presentations. The information gained from the study will be will be kept in a locked cabinet at the University of Auckland. A password to protect soft data will be secured. All data will be destroyed six years after completion of the research.

This study involves conducting interviews, and I am writing to ask if you would consider providing consent to conduct interviews with staff from your agency. The interview will take an hour but can be extended if the participants require more time. Whilst your staff may be asked to comment on how your agency endeavours to recognise indigenous peoples' perspectives and capacities in its mandates, you will be asked to sign a Consent Form which provides assurance that your staff's participation to the research will not affect their professional relationship with you or compromise their standing with the agency.

If you provide this consent, I would like to sit in your monthly staff meetings or other opportunities where I can present the research.   Employees who would consider participating in the study will then contact me directly and will be provided a Participant Information Sheet (PIS) and a Consent Form (CF) that gives details about their participation. You would not have any knowledge of who chose to participate or not in order to protect participant confidentiality.

You have the right to decline participation to this research. If you have any questions about this study, please contact me at the following address:

New Zealand:
Marjorie M. Balay-As
The University of Auckland
School of Counselling, Human Services and Social Work
Epsom Campus, Auckland, New Zealand
Phone: (+64) 022-4397-331
mbal580.aucklanduni.ac.nz

Philippines:
Marjorie M. Balay-As
65 Siapno Road, Baguio City, Philippines
Phone: (+63) 928-2098-364
mbal580@aucklanduni.ac.nz

You may also contact my supervisors and the Head of School at the address below:

Dr Jay Marlowe
The University of Auckland
School of Counselling, Human
Services and Social Work
Private Bag 92 601
Phone: (09) 6238899 ext 48248
jm.marlowe@auckland.ac.nz

Dr JC Gaillard
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Private Bag 92019, Auckland.
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(New Zealand); (+63)-919-866-0835 (Philippines)
jc.gaillard@auckland.ac.nz

Associate Professor Christa Fouche
Head of School
The University of Auckland
School for Counselling, Human Services and Social Work
Private Bag 92 601
Phone: +64 9 373 7999 ext 48648
c.fouche@auckland.ac.nz

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON _____ for (3) years, Reference Number: _____.

For any queries regarding ethical concerns you may contact the Chair, The University of Auckland Human Ethics Committee, The University of Auckland, Office of the Vice Chancellor, Private Bag 92019, Auckland 1142. Telephone 09 3737599 extn. 83711, email ro-ethics@auckland.ac.nz.

Participant Information Sheet [Interviews]

Participants from organisations

Date: ……………………

Project title: **Disasters through and Indigenous Lens in the Philippines**

My name is Marjorie Balay-As. I am a student at The University of Auckland, enrolled in a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Degree in the School of Counselling, Human Services and Social Work. I am conducting a research that focuses on understanding disasters through indigenous perspectives and how these perceptions impact on community development, particularly on disaster risk reduction (DRR) policies and program/project implementation. I would like to ask if you would consider being a participant to this research.

Local perspectives are important in responding to disasters and your insights to this topic as someone who works closely on disasters with the indigenous Kankanaey would certainly be helpful. The study will draw responses that will inform the formulation and implementation of relevant policies and programs on DRR and will look to inform the practice of community development among indigenous peoples. The study also involves interviews with key officials from the local government units, government agencies and possibly with mining/mini-hydro corporations to obtain diverse perspectives on disasters that will provide a comprehensive and contextual approach to DRR. Information gathered from this study will be used to complete my PhD degree and for future possible publications and conference presentations.

This study involves conducting semi-structured interviews, and I am writing to ask if you would consider participating in an individual interview. A list of example questions is included below:

1. In what ways has your organisation/agency been involved in disaster-related work among indigenous peoples?
2. How does your organisation integrate indigenous peoples' perspectives and capacities in disaster risk reduction (DRR) in your planning, policy formulation and program implementation?

The interviews can be organised in a private location that you will suggest. You are assured that the information you provide is accessible only to Marjorie Balay-As. If you agree, the interview will be audio recorded and notes will be taken as well during the interview .It is also your choice to stop the recording at any part of the conversation or not to be recorded at all. The recording and the notes will be kept in a locked cabinet at the University of Auckland. A password to protect soft data will be secured. All data will be destroyed six years after completion of the research.

Your participation is voluntary and if you are willing to participate, you will be asked to sign a consent form that details what your participation entails. The interview will take an hour and can be extended if you require more time. If the interview causes some feelings of distress or discomfort on your part, please let me know. You have the right

THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND
NEW ZEALAND
Te Whare Wānanga o Tāmaki Makaurau

School of Counselling, Human Services and Social Work
Main Reception, A Block, Gate 3
74 Epsom Avenue, Epsom
Phone: 09-623 8899

The University of Auckland
Private Bag 92019
Auckland 1142, New Zealand

Participant Information Sheet [Interviews – to be read to participants before establishing verbal consent]

Community Participants

Date: ……………………

Project title: **Disasters through and Indigenous Lens in the Philippines**

My name is Marjorie Balay-As. I am a student at The University of Auckland, enrolled in a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Degree in the School of Counselling, Human Services and Social Work. I am conducting a research project that focuses on understanding disasters through indigenous perspectives and how these perceptions impact on community development, particularly on disaster risk reduction (DRR) policies and program/project implementation. I would like to ask if you would consider being a participant.

Local perspectives are important in responding to disasters and your insights to this topic as an indigenous Kankanaey would certainly be helpful. The study will draw responses that will inform the formulation and implementation of relevant policies and programs on DRR and will look to inform the practice of community development among indigenous peoples. The study also involves interviews with key officials from the local government units, government agencies and possibly with mining/mini-hydro corporations to obtain diverse perspectives on disasters that will provide a comprehensive and contextual approach to DRR. Information gathered from this study will be used to complete my PhD degree and for future possible publications and conferences.

This study involves conducting semi-structured interviews, and I am writing to ask if you would consider participating. A list of example questions is included below:

1. What are your experiences on disasters?
2. How have you and your community responded to these experiences?
3. In what ways had the government, NGOs and other external actors recognised your experiences of disasters and your ways of responding to these in terms of policy formulation and program implementation?

Your participation is voluntary and following cultural practices in setting agreements, you may indicate your willingness to participate orally. The conversations between us where you express your voluntary and informed consent in participating to this research will be audio-recorded but you can choose to turn off the recording at any time or not to be audio recorded at all. The transcriptions of the audio-recording shall be read to you and you can ask me to add, delete or correct the information you provided. You are assured that Marjorie Balay-As will be the only person who will have access to the recording and this will be kept in a locked cabinet at The University of Auckland. A password to protect soft data will be secured. All data will be destroyed after six years upon completion of the research. The interview will take an hour and can be extended if you require more time.

For the elders, I will be recording your chants to make sure that I capture the meaning of the idiomatic expressions innate in the chants. You may decline to be recorded. I will be transcribing the chants and will come back to you to read the transcriptions for you to correct information I might have erroneously interpreted.

The interview might cause some feelings of distress or discomfort on your part. If this happens, please let me know. You have the right to discontinue the interview at any time and if you need to get further help with this, I will provide you with insights about possible support services. There will be no mention of your participation to this research in any referrals that will be made. Should you opt to perform the indigenous processes of healing and cleansing for the distress and discomfort caused by this research, support shall be made available to enable you to perform the required ritual.

The participation of the village chiefs/mayor to this project is limited to making public announcements about this research. If you agree to participate, I will personally conduct the interview with you. Communal rituals and informal gathering by which you may be asked to participate as part of this research shall only focus on the project and no other activities shall take place such as political campaigns or rallies.

Once the research is completed, I will come back and sit with you in your evening bonfire sessions and other communal gatherings to present the result of the study. You have the right to decline participation to this research.

If you have any questions about this study, please contact me at the following address:

New Zealand:
Marjorie Balay-As
The University of Auckland
School of Counselling, Human Services and Social Work
Epsom Campus, 1142 Auckland, New Zealand
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mbal580@aucklanduni.ac.nz

Philippines:
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2600 Baguio City, Philippines
Phone: (+63) 928-2098-364
mbal580@aucklanduni.ac.nz

You may also contact my supervisors and the Head of School at the address below:

Dr Jay Marlowe
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APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON _____for (3) years, Reference Number: _____**.**

For any queries regarding ethical concerns you may contact the Chair, The University of Auckland Human Ethics Committee, The University of Auckland, Office of the Vice Chancellor, Private Bag 92019, Auckland 1142. Telephone 09 3737599 extn. 83711, email ro-ethics@auckland.ac.nz.

Appendix D

NCIP Certification - Precondition

CERTIFICATION PRECONDITION
No. CP-CAR-2016-055

This is to **CERTIFY** that **MARJORIE M. BALAY-AS** has satisfactorily complied with the requirements for the issuance of a Certification Precondition, as prescribed under Sec.59 of the RA 8371 otherwise known as Indigenous Peoples Rights Act as implemented by NCIP Administrative Order No.1, Series of 2012 also known as the Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices and Customary Laws Research and Documentation Guidelines, for the proposed research entitled **"DISASTERS THROUGH AN INDIGENOUS LENS IN THE PHILIPPINES"**.

The grant of this Certification Precondition is subject to the following conditions:

1. Data gathered shall be used solely for academic purposes only;
2. Research output must still be presented by the Researcher to the informants for review or possible corrections before finalizing the same;
3. Copies of the research output in its final form must be furnished to the Indigenous Cultural Communities/Indigenous Peoples (ICCs/IPs) of Lubo, Madaymen and Palina of Kibungan, Benguet for filing in their registry and a copy must also be furnished to this office.

Moreover, this office reserves the right to take the necessary action to protect the rights and interests of the Indigenous Cultural Communities/Indigenous Peoples (ICCs/IPs) concerned, including the cancellation/revocation of this certification, as the case maybe.

Issued this 16th day of December, 2016 in Baguio City, Philippines.

ATTY. ROLAND P. CALDE
Regional Director

cc : Marjorie M. Balay-as
: File

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