

## Rationale

Jails and prisons and their inmates and prisoners often suffer silently from natural hazards and disasters. Many jails and prisons, in such diverse contexts as Indonesia following the 2004 tsunami and the United States of America when Hurricane Katrina struck in 2005, have been badly affected by natural hazards in recent years. In the Philippines, typhoons Ondoy, in 2009, and Yolanda, in 2013 (Box 1), severely impacted jails and prisons in Metro Manila and Eastern Visayas. However, responses to disasters in jails and prison are most often ad-hoc and not embedded within everyday disaster risk reduction and management policies nor jails and prisons are considered within local governments' policies to deal with disasters. Such gap in policy and practice is accentuated by a lack of research on how jails and prisons as well as inmates and prisoners actually deal with natural hazards and disasters.

## Evidence

Evidence collected between July 2015 and January 2016 include:

- 33 interviews with key stakeholders of jail and prison management in the Philippines;
- 11 interviews with inmate and prisoner leaders as well as former political detainees;
- nine focus groups (Fig. 1) using participatory tools with groups of eight to 20 inmates and prisoners in municipal, city, district, provincial and national jails and prisons in different regions of the country;
- a vast amount of unpublished (statistics, reports, policy guidelines, theses) and published ma-



Fig. 1. Focus group with prisoners of the San Mateo Municipal Jail, July 2015

## An overview of Philippine jails and prisons



Fig. 3. Quezon City Jail in the morning of 6th January 2016

This poster only focuses on transitional and long-term jails and prisons (Fig. 2). The total population detained in BuCor and BJMP facilities alone has grown from 75,699 inmates in 2003 to 111,497 in 2013. As a consequence, overcrowding rates often exceed 1000%, with peaks over 2000% (Fig. 3). Overcrowding results in challenging sanitary and health conditions. The annual inmate death rate reached 8‰ in 2013. Deaths in detention stem from a wide range of illnesses that usually break out of poor sanitary conditions and inappropriate food supply.

Temporary detention upon arrest	Transitional (while awaiting sentence) and short-term (< 3 years) detention	Long-term (> 3 years) detention
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lock-ups of the Philippine National Police (PNP)</li> <li>- Lock-ups of the Armed Forces of the Philippines</li> <li>- Lock-ups of the Bureau of Immigration</li> <li>- Lock-ups of the National Bureau of Investigation</li> <li>- Lock-ups of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Municipal, city and district jails managed by the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP)</li> <li>- Municipal jails and the Camp Crime Custodial Center managed by the Philippine National Police</li> <li>- Provincial and sub-provincial jails managed by provincial governments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prisons and penal farms managed by the Bureau of Corrections (BuCor)</li> </ul>
Juvenile (< 18 years old) detention		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rehabilitation Centers for the Youth managed by the Department of Social Welfare and Development</li> </ul>		

Fig. 2. The different types of jails and prisons in the Philippines, as of 2016

## Natural hazards in Philippine jails and prisons

Most jails and prisons are exposed to natural hazards, including typhoons, floods, earthquakes and landslides. These natural hazards rank high amongst the threats inmates and prisoners face in Philippine jails and prisons (Fig. 4). However, these hazards are considered amidst a large array of other non-natural threats.

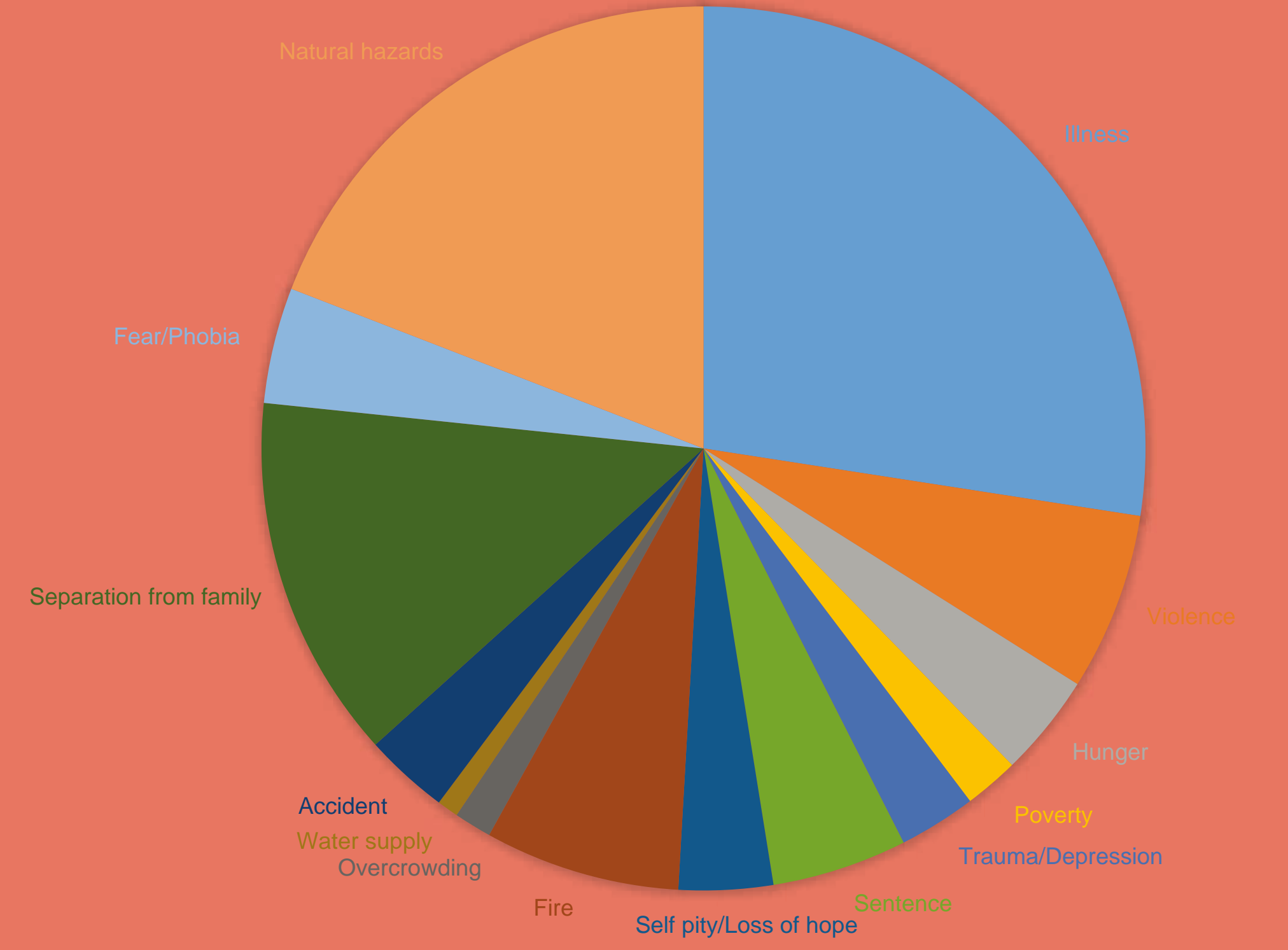


Fig. 4. Natural and other hazards faced by Philippine inmates, as of 2015-16

## Pangkalahatan

- Shared governance at the scale of the jails / prisons reflecting key Philippine cultural values such as *damayan* and *bayanihan*

## Brigada

- Prisoners' organisations relying on elected officers and financial contributions from each affiliated cell and other sources (Fig. 7).
- Provide support to build infrastructure and assistance to prisoners in the event of major emergencies in exchange of political allegiance.

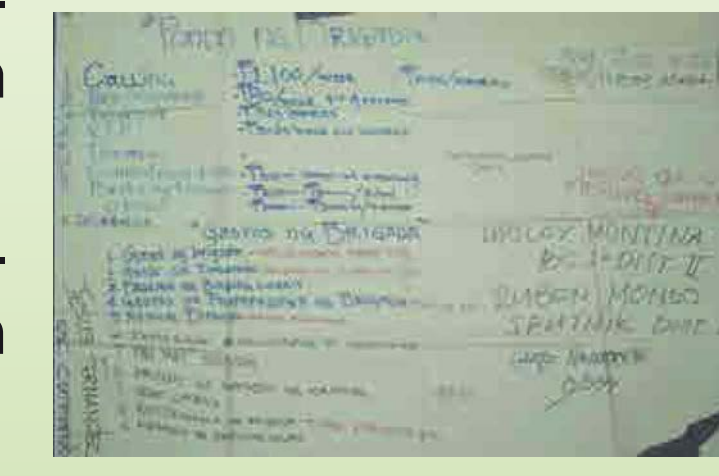


Fig. 7. Distribution of brigada budget for one week at the Quezon City Jail in early 2000s (R. Narag)

## Cell

- The, usually elected, cell officers (e.g. mayor/a, kulturero/a, bastonero/a) look after both the cell's everyday life and unusual situations (Fig. 6)).
- The cell budget, which stems from the contribution of patron prisoners (also called VIP) and other sources, is bankrolled to cover regular house chores (e.g. cleaning), unexpected needs (e.g. candles when electricity is cut after a typhoon) and maintenance (e.g. roof repair after a typhoon) and support marginalised inmates and prisoners in time of need (e.g. illness, death) in exchange of political allegiance.



Fig. 6. Quezon City Jail cell structure in the early 2000s (R. Narag)

## Karancho / Kasalo

- Integrating social networks is most often a prerequisite to secure incomes. The lowest and tightest level of social networks is the rancho or salo that refer to a small group of close and marginalised inmates/prisoners usually tied to a more powerful inmate/prisoner who acts as the patron in a typical client-patron relationship.
- The clients work (e.g. do the cooking, dishes, laundry, messaging) for their patron in exchange of a weekly wage, extra-financial assistance (e.g. in case of illness or other emergency) and materials supports (e.g. soap and toothpaste).
- In time of disaster, this is the first inter-relational support system mobilised by the inmates and prisoners to sustain their basic needs. Rancho/Salo mates or karancho/kasalo share food and soap and, very importantly, provide moral support and informal counselling.

## Prisoner

- To deal with both everyday hardship and natural hazards, having money is essential. In consequence, many prisoners try, as much as they can, to save small amounts of cash to cope with any possible adverse events. Cash is secured through visitors or work inside the jail or prison (Fig. 5).
- Prayers and religious beliefs constitute another key coping mechanism often practiced several times a day in private spaces or in the worship corner of the jails and prisons.
- Finally, in time of emergency as in everyday life, inmates and prisoners try to keep busy as much as they can to cope with the separation from their family and boredom.



Fig. 5. Working prisoners at the San Mateo Municipal Jail, July 2015

## Everyday hazards

Considering everyday hazards when dealing with natural hazards is important because prisoners' behaviour and practices are often shaped by addressing these threats, as well as meeting food and hygiene needs, at the detriment of other more distant dangers such as natural hazards.

# THE DIFFERENT LAYERS OF PRISONERS CAPACITIES FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

## Maximising prisoners' capacities to strengthen disaster risk reduction

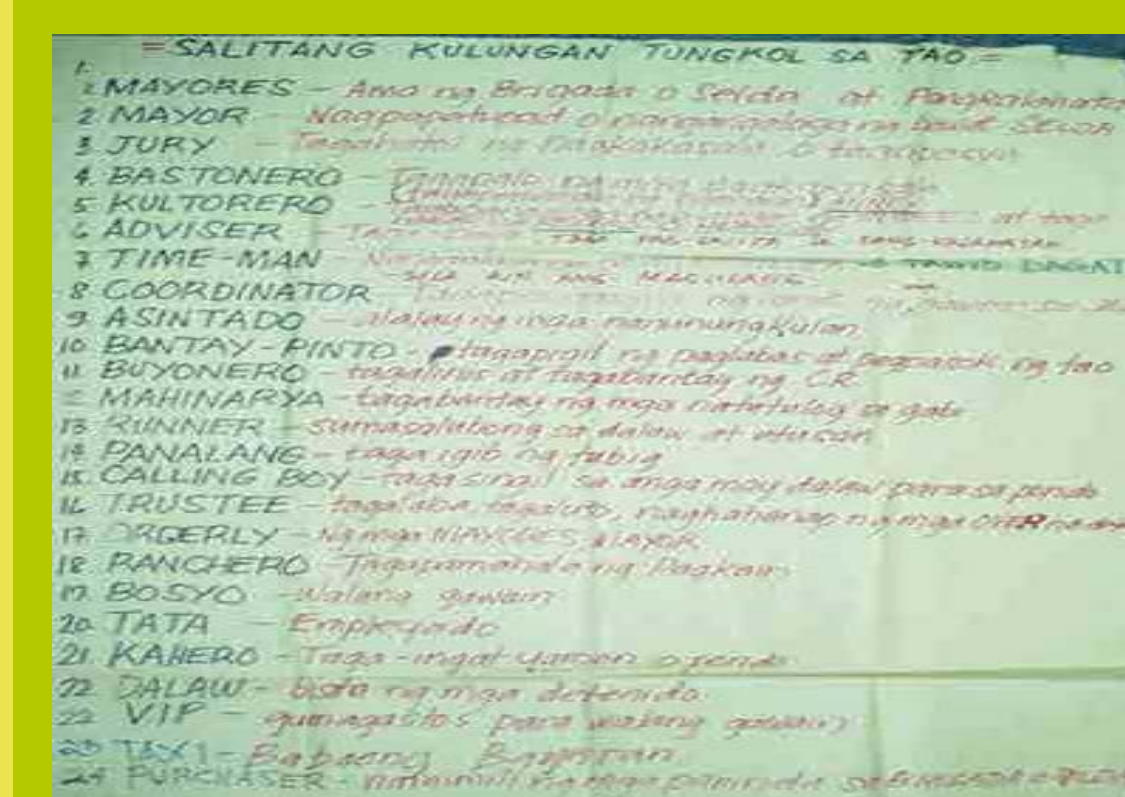


Fig. 8. Existing cell officers at the Quezon City Jail in early 2000s (R. Narag)

- In each cell, one prisoner should be designated as DRR coordinator and equipped with basic training, including first aid and counselling (Fig. 8.).
- DRR coordinators should contribute to disaster risk assessment and DRR plans.
- DRR coordinators should also be in charge of training their fellow cell officers with regards of DRR and of conveying information on natural hazards and disasters, including early warning in time of emergency.
- Prisoner cell officers should eventually prepare and train their karancho in dealing with natural hazards. All ranchos should make sure to have a complete and safe go box.
- In time of emergency, DRR coordinators should coordinate response and evacuation.
- Ultimately, prisoners should be included in an integrated approach to DRR in Philippine jails and prisons (Fig. 9).

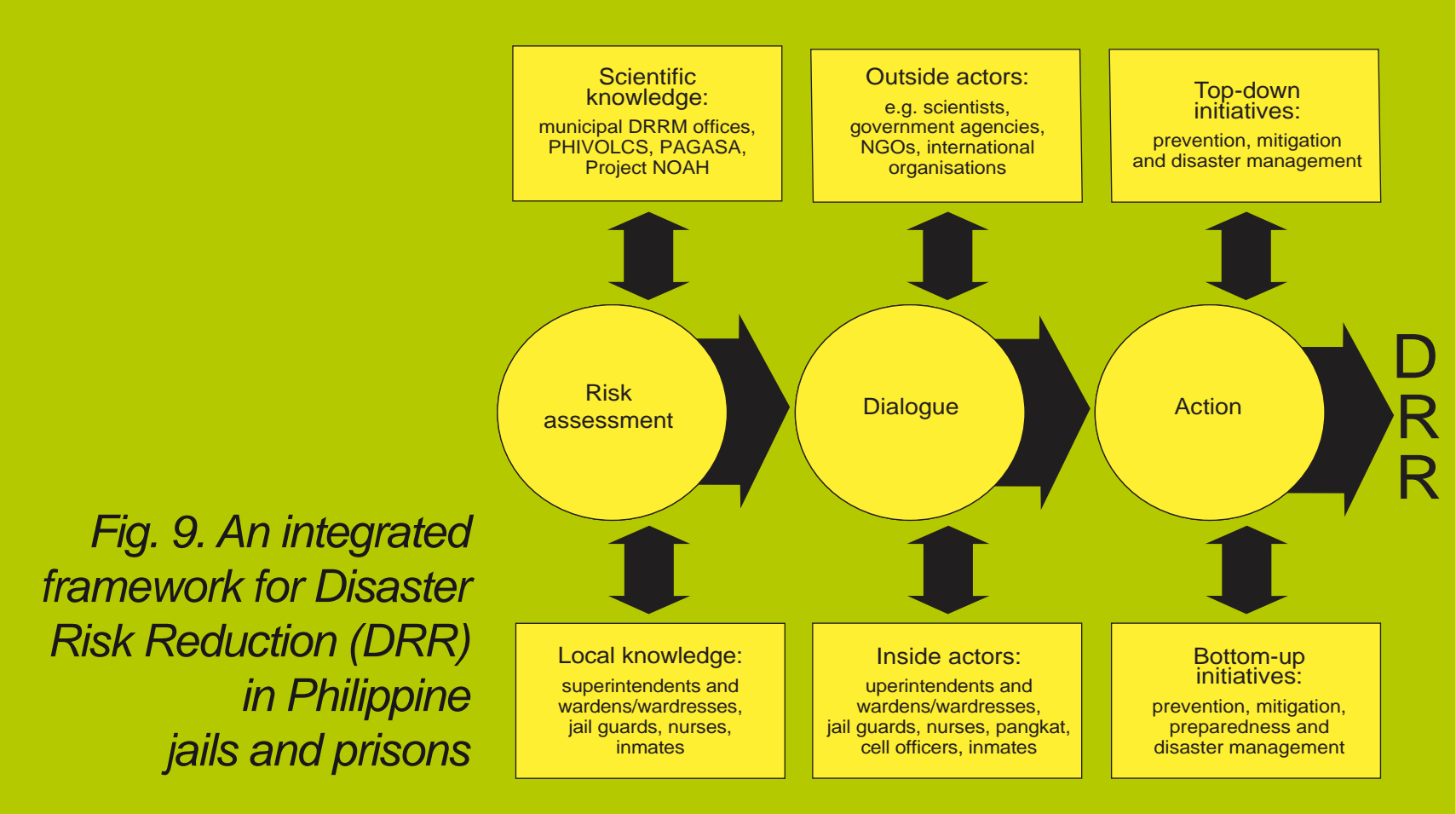


Fig. 9. An integrated framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in Philippine jails and prisons

## References

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