



## Case Study 30

### HR/OD Intervention Focus: Crafting Strategic Plans

#### Strategic Plans as Road Maps

Delfin Garcia, planning officer and currently officer-in-charge of the Finance and Administrative division of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS), believes that a strategic plan is vital to the success of his organisation. “During our preparation of the strategic plan, we saw the various requirements or needs of the Institute to further

upgrade and meet the [public need] for a good government agency [for] disaster risk reduction,” he says.

For him, a strategic plan can turn into a road map which will enable PHIVOLCS to attain its objectives and fulfil its mandate, but gaps had to be first addressed. Garcia saw the need to improve their seismic monitoring and volcanic monitoring networks and, at the same time, upgrade the level of disaster preparedness and risk reduction in all communities. Moreover, PHIVOLCS needed to enhance the skills of staff and capacitate the technical people to be adept with new technologies.

Fortunately for PHIVOLCS, timely help came when the Government of Australia through the PAHRODF decided to get involved. Since then, the Facility has initiated two interventions which greatly helped the Institute.

#### Strategic Planning and Results-Based Performance Management System

Garcia, together with other PHIVOLCS key personnel – from the Director to the Deputy Director, Division Chiefs, section heads and even to the scientists assigned to the Institute by the Department of Science and Technology, attended two PAHRODF-supported interventions. The strategic planning intervention in 2013 made them see the need to amend the mission and vision of PHIVOLCS and develop a strategic plan that will serve as a road map for the Institute afterwards. Meanwhile, the second intervention was on the results-based performance management system, which also came at an opportune time as it helped the Institute meet the requirement of the Civil Service Commission (CSC) for all government agencies to have a performance management system in place before the end of that year.

As head of the Planning Section, Garcia knew he had to play a role in formulating the Institute's strategic plans. With the guidance of a learning service provider (LSP), he and his colleagues were able to develop their strategic plans for the next five years. However, the work did not end once the interventions were over. “Right after the crafting of the strategic plans and the results based performance management system, we had to roll out these new learnings to the staff. I personally visited Visayas and Mindanao to capacitate our people there,” he narrates.

Naturally, challenges were met along the way. Time constraint was a major hindrance which they had to contend with. Garcia shares that developing the strategic plans took all of six months, and this took them away from their usual work commitments. It was a good thing that PHIVOLCS personnel remained committed to the Institute, its stakeholders and the communities they serve. Because of this, they adapted to the changes and tried to meet their deadlines. Garcia believes the support and inspiration from the director and other key officers of PHIVOLCS may have brought this about.

### **Impact and Contributions**

Garcia believes that one major contribution of the interventions to the Institute is the development of well-crafted strategic plans. According to him, these plans “will serve as our bible...in the next five to 10 years.” Moreover, they gained new perspectives and learned more about the personality and character of their colleagues. This has enabled Garcia and other key personnel to make adjustments as they perform their tasks.

With strategic plans for the next five years in place, the Institute envisions adding 20 more seismic monitoring networks to the 65 it currently has over the next three years. Moreover, volcano monitoring networks are also being capacitated with the right equipment and the right people.

Mr. Garcia proudly talks about some of his organisation's recent accomplishments. During the recent Bohol earthquake, for example, a disaster preparedness plan was clearly in place. Hazard maps were immediately prepared, information and education campaigns were conducted in the area, and the Province was duly informed of the situation.

Disaster preparedness plans were also rolled out for all regions in the country. “For this year, we have visited all the regions and cascaded the various disaster risk reduction activities and all the various hazards present in each region,” he narrates. Such information and maps would be disseminated to LGUs in order to give them a guide on disaster preparedness, This is how PHIVOLCS helps ensure that all regions throughout the Philippines are prepared and safe.

Garcia credits several players for the success of the strategic planning intervention. He acknowledges the expertise of the LSP in imparting new learnings and guiding them in crafting their strategic plans. Other stakeholders such as government agencies, NGOs involved in disaster risk reduction and the general public also helped Garcia and his colleagues gain other insights. He is also grateful for the all-out support and guidance of PAHRODF and PHIVOLCS management.

At the moment, PHIVOLCS is now working towards obtaining certification from the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO). Guided by what he has learned from the interventions, Garcia is confident that they will succeed in making the Institute ISO-certified.

Garcia hopes that PAHRODF's assistance will continue, possibly in the form of talent management and change management interventions. He also hopes to capacitate others to ensure that they can also carry out the Institute's mandate. He reiterates, “The strategic plan that was prepared during the intervention given to us by PAHRODF will help those who will be following our footsteps here at the Institute.”

*Delfin Garcia, Planning Officer and currently officer-in-charge of the Finance and Administrative division of PHIVOLCS, was one of the participants HR/OD intervention on Strategic Planning for PHIVOLCS*