

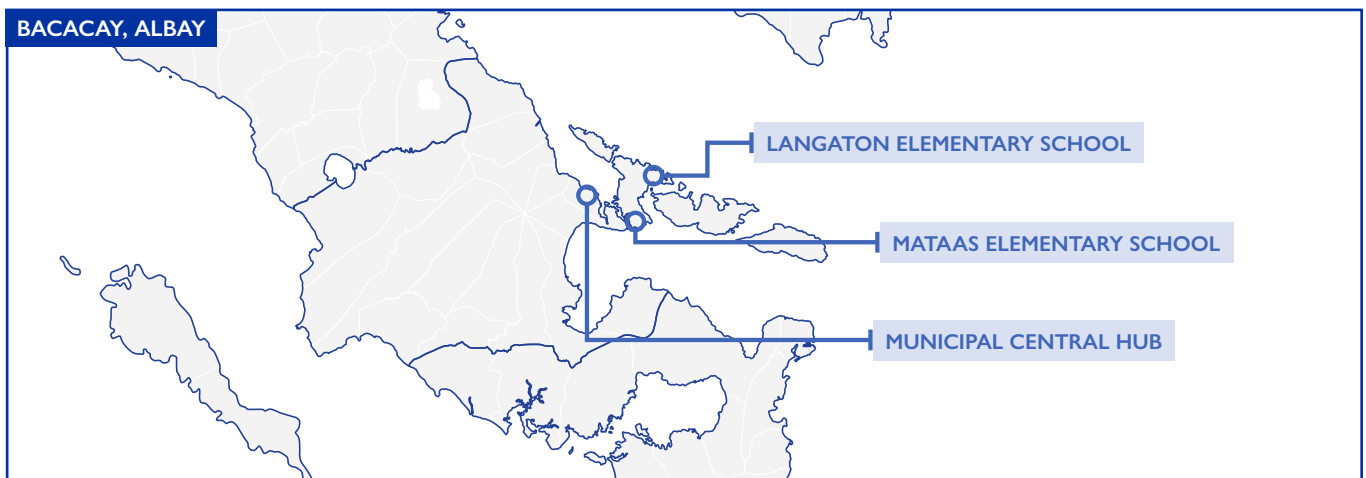
## Generating Renewable and Innovative Designs for Displacement (GRID)



The Generating Renewable and Innovative Designs for Displacement project, through support from the Government of the Kingdom of Norway, was implemented by International Organization for Migration (IOM) in the Province of Albay in the Bicol Region, an area prone to disasters and displacement caused by typhoons and floods, volcanic eruptions and landslides, among other hazards. The project aimed at providing efficient and reliable access to energy to local communities and displaced populations in emergency situations, using climate-responsive and sustainable solutions.



Two schools and a municipal evacuation centre in Bacacay and Cagragay, which serve as disaster evacuation sites, were equipped with modular solar photovoltaic systems. Each school can shelter 150-200 people, while the municipal evacuation centre can accommodate up to 400 people. During emergencies, the two schools are linked to the municipal evacuation centre, which acts as the central hub to manage the shifting demand in power supply, providing electricity for evacuees. Internet access is also provided in the three locations for uninterrupted communication, including with first responders. IOM also partnered with the private sector to easily swap batteries and inverters between locations depending on the situation, contributing to efficient and accessible power at evacuation centres during emergencies and provide access to energy for schools and community members during regular operations.



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## From Darkness to Light: Solar Panels Bring Hope to Typhoon-Affected Towns

Located in the Pacific Typhoon Belt, the Philippines experiences an average of 20 typhoons yearly. While previous years saw fewer major storms, this year brought an unprecedented surge of six tropical storms and super typhoons in a span of four weeks. These storms severely affected many regions, bringing heavy rains that triggered landslides and floods, damaging houses in coastal provinces.

The schools and evacuation centres were called into action to shelter evacuated families during Severe Tropical Storm Kristine and Super Typhoon Pepito, the two most severe storms to hit the region in October-November 2024. During STY Pepito, approximately 400 evacuees were accommodated at the Langaton and Mataas Elementary Schools. For families living far from the evacuation sites, neighbouring houses built with concrete served as additional temporary evacuation sites. Barangay officials and school management effectively implemented the emergency plans introduced through the project, and community members said they felt comfortable and safe inside the evacuation centres.

Agnes, a town official from Barangay Mataas, played a key role in implementing their plans and coordinating with locals during their evacuation. Along with her co-officer Alma and the town captain, they planned and prepared for Super Typhoon Pepito's impact.



*“Three days before the expected landfall of Super Typhoon Pepito, we already informed the residents to prepare. They tied their houses down so if the typhoon passes through them, the damage won't be as severe.”*

– Alma

She adds that the two-way radios and megaphones provided through the project made communication within the community easier.

In Barangay Langaton, Town Councillor Alma shared how they secured solar panels in Langaton Elementary School ahead of the storm by tying them down. Both island towns prepared and implemented their pre-evacuation plans and coordinated with the central hub to prepare batteries and essential supplies.



*“Because of the project, evacuation plans are better here in Barangay Mataas. It's now easier for us evacuees to stay comfortable. We don't have to stay in dark and warm evacuation sites during climate emergencies.”*

– Agnes

A few days after the typhoon's landfall, after the area was declared safe, families returned to their homes. In their post-evacuation assessment, both island towns reported zero casualties and minimal to no damage to houses. The solar panels remained tied to the school roofs until weather conditions stabilized. The project's innovative approach helped prevent displacement, save lives, and safeguard the affected communities.

Through IOM's Generating Renewable and Innovative Designs for Displacement project, communities in hard-to-reach areas have strengthened emergency preparedness plans and gained access to safer, more dignified temporary shelters during climate emergencies.