Post Disaster Social Capital: Trust Equity, Bayanihan and Typhoon Yolanda.

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Abstract:

- Purpose: The purpose of this paper is to explore the impact of disaster rehabilitation interventions on bonding social capital in the aftermath of Typhoon Yolanda.
- Design/methodology/approach: The data from the project is drawn from eight barangays in Tacloban City, the Philippines. Local residents and politicians were surveyed and interviewed to examine perceptions of resilience and community self-help.
- Findings: The evidence shows that haphazard or inequitable distribution of relief goods and services generated discontent within communities. However, whilst perceptions of community cooperation and self-help are relatively low, perceptions of resilience are relatively high.
- Research limitations/implications: This research was conducted in urban communities after a sudden large-scale disaster. The findings are not necessarily applicable in the rural context or in relation to slow onset disasters.
- Practical implications: Relief agencies should think more carefully about the social impact of the distribution of relief goods and services. Inequality can undermine community level cooperation.
- Social implications: A better consideration of social as well as material capital in the aftermath of disaster could help community self-help, resilience and positive adaptation.
- Originality/value: This study draws on evidence from local communities to contradict the overarching rhetoric of resilience in the aftermath of Typhoon Yolanda.

Introduction:

On 8 November 2013 super-typhoon Yolanda (international name: Haiyan) hit the Visayas region of the Philippines. Typhoon Yolanda (herein referred to as Yolanda) was one of the strongest typhoons ever to make landfall with wind speeds of up to 315 kms per hour and a storm surge that reached six meters in some coastal areas (Lagmay, 2014). Official figures show that 6,293 individuals were reported dead, 1,061 went missing and 28,689 were injured. In total, approximately 16 million people were affected by Yolanda. Tacloban, a highly urbanised city[1]. and

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administrative centre of the Eastern Visayas region, suffered the greatest damage in terms of casualties and infrastructure (NDRRMC, 2014). Yolanda was an extreme, but by no means isolated, event as typhoons in the region are becoming more frequent and intense (Mei and Xie, 2016). Coupled with increasing urbanization, typhoons have an increased likelihood of turning into disasters with the poor being the least able to mitigate, adapt or migrate.

After Yolanda, the media, government officials, aid agencies and survivors themselves, frequently referenced resilience and *bayanihan* in relation to post-disaster recovery (Gawad Kalinga, 2013; Viray, 2014; Castaneda, 2015). Resilience is about endurance and adaptation,[2] whilst *bayanihan* is the Filipino principle of mutual effort. *Bayanihan* is akin to "bonding" social capital and is arguably especially important amongst poor communities that are lacking other forms of capital. Broadly, social capital refers to the norms and networks that contribute to collective action (Woolcock and Narayan, 2000). However, social capital is not necessarily about people acting in the "best" way, it is also about acting in predictable ways[3]. Rehabilitation schemes that do not account for local realities will be unsustainable. This article focuses on the factors that limited trust within communities as well as trust between survivors and those tasked with relief and rehabilitation after Yolanda. We argue that inequity was a key driver of mistrust during post-disaster recovery. The sometimes-chaotic distribution of relief goods and services and seemingly random benchmarks established for government compensation, undermined the growth of resilient and cohesive communities. The guiding themes in our work are therefore trust and equity as they relate to bonding social capital.

We argue that both resilience and *bayanihan* were in fact "myths" that masked negative coping strategies and resentment over the unequal distribution of aid and the slow pace of the relief effort. In fact, the relief effort exacerbated existing inequalities and created new ones. In addition, it triggered social divisiveness and envy and caused deep personal resentment and anguish amongst the excluded (Ong, 2015; Wilkinson, 2015, p.22). We will show that the failure to distribute resources transparently and efficiently undermined trust and *bayanihan*. This made it hard to form the norms and networks that help social capital grow.

The first section of this article provides a brief overview of the social capital literature and its relevance for post-disaster recovery. We also outline the key terms and concepts central to our argument. The second section explains why we chose Tacloban as a case study and outlines our data gathering methods. Our argument is informed by a range of primary survey data, gathered from eight barangays in Tacloban in 2014, 2015 and 2016, a number of interviews and focus group discussions held with government officials, relief agencies and survivors. The next section compares the narratives of resilience and *bayanihan* that were observed after Yolanda against the conditions that survivors actually experienced. The following discussion section examines the damaging effects of claiming resilience and *bayanihan* when in fact the process of recovery was not as positive or socially cohesive as these terms suggest. In conclusion, we examine why this matters more broadly for post-disaster recovery amongst the urban poor.

Social Capital

Social capital is argued to be the capital of the poor because it is commonly asserted that while poor people lack material assets, they can generally rely on kinship and social networks to protect themselves against "routine deprivation" and occasional risks and shocks. Perhaps unsurprisingly social capital has also been presented as a core driver of post-disaster recovery (Aldrich, 2012; Aldrich and Meyer, 2015, Reininger et al., 2013). This is based on the assumption that strong bonding ties help poor households to more easily recover, especially when other forms of material capital are in short supply. However, the link between social capital and post-disaster recovery is still unclear and until more studies are done, a strictly optimistic view overlooks the significant structural barriers poor households face regularly and during post-disaster recovery.

Putnam conceptualized social capital as "features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions" (1993, p.167). Trust, norms and networks were subsequently used to identify indicators for social capital (Schuller et al., 2000). Meanwhile, Lin presents social capital as a simple "investment in social relations with expected returns in the marketplace" with the marketplace being understood as economic, political, labour based or exchanges within communities (2001, p.19). Consequently, investment in social capital is a profit seeking endeavour.

Following the logic of investment and return, social capital has become a popular concept in development policy because it specifies a resource – a type of capital – to be tapped and strategically mobilized by individuals and groups to meet their needs (Cleaver, 2005; Fafchamps, 2007). Specifically, three types of social capital are identified: bonding, bridging and linking. Woolcock and Narayan (2000) define bonding social capital as ties among people who tend to be closely connected, such as immediate family members, neighbours, and close friends. Bridging social capital refers to ties among people from different geographical, occupational and ethnic backgrounds who have similar political and economic status. Lastly, linking social capital are the ties between the community and people in positions of influence in formal organizations, such as schools, agricultural extension offices, the police or local or national government entities (Rossing et al., 2010, p.270).

Social Capital in the Philippines

The Philippines social science literature has rarely been examined using the conceptual framework of bonding, bridging and linking social capital (Abad, 2005). Nevertheless, recent studies based on national survey research have provided some valuable insights into the state of social capital in the archipelago (Abad, 2005; Porio, 2017). Both studies found that rich bonding capital among family and friends is pervasive in Philippines society but most Filipinos lack bridging and linking capital.

These findings confirm decades old findings about the strength of kin and friendship ties in Filipino society (Pal, 1966; Carroll, 1968; Morais, 1981). Exchanges of assistance within a network are often seen as acts of duty, love and care. "Thick trust" operates within these networks. Thick trust is defined by Putnam as "trust embedded in personal relations that are strong, frequent, and embedded in wider networks" (2000, p.136). In contrast "thin trust" or generalized trust is a person's estimation of the general moral standards of the surrounding society. In Filipino society, there is a

scarcity of social cohesion and a lack of thin trust (Abad, 2005; Rothstein and Uslaner, 2005). Rothstein and Uslaner (2005) note that while some measurements of trust are low in the Philippines, there are many different types of trust. Thick trust is extremely strong so much so that when members of one's family makes a request of them, it is almost impossible to refuse. However, such forms of allegiance can also lead to negative forms of social capital such as the "in-group" acceptance of corruption and nepotism (Lin, 2001) or criminal behaviour.

Abad (2005) found that cooperation, as a communal coping mechanism akin to bonding social capital, is based on cultural norms such as *bayanihan* as opposed to associational regulations. *Bayanihan* has been described by Bankoff as "toiling on another's behalf and assuming another's burdens" (2003, p.168) whilst Cox and Cox refer to *bayanihan* as "a cultural immune system that heals over wounds [...] allowing life to carry on" (2016, p.48). *Bayanihan* was first referenced in relation to the communal effort in agricultural communities however "the tradition has diffused throughout Filipino society and is an expression of team spirit and sharing of labour" (Beza et al, 2018, p.142). The bonding inherent in these norms is akin to social capital and fosters thick trust within communities. People trust that if they follow the norms of *bayanihan* then they will get a return on their investment as people will help them too.

Sztompka (1999, p.25) defines trust as a "bet about the future contingent actions of others." Similarly, Ostrom and Ahn see it as "a particular level of subjective probability with which an agent assesses that another agent or group of agents will perform a particular action" (2003, p.xvi). Both of these definitions see trust as a belief and a commitment, which is what separates trust from "hope" or "confidence". Sztompka (1999, p.24) argues that trust is not a "discourse of faith" but a "discourse of agency" demanding the agents to actively anticipate and face an unknown future and make a bet to act favourably towards one another. A major contributing factor to the low levels of thin trust in Philippines society is inequality. Despite sustained economic growth there is significant deprivation in the Philippines with 26.3 percent of the population living in poverty in the first semester of 2015 (PSA, 2016c). Meanwhile in 2016, the wealth of the 50 richest Filipinos equated to 24.24% of the countries' entire GDP (Dela Paz and Schnabel, 2017). Rothstein and Uslaner argue that as a result of severe inequalities, the "sense of a shared fate" is eroded between the rich and the poor or in the worst case, it has completely disintegrated (2005, p.46). This contrast is especially evident in densely packed urban environments.

Social Capital and Resilience

Post-disaster resilience, especially in impoverished environments, entails interaction with and the governance of communities. Consequently, notions of resilience as a personal or individual trait are limited; instead resilience is better understood as "the interaction between person and environment, in which individuals under adverse conditions utilize internal and external resources to achieve positive adaptation" (Pan and Chan, 2007, p.165). Resilience is about personal and community capacities and the ability of both to self-organise and adapt. Resilience against and in the aftermath of disasters is ecological and social (Adger et al, 2005; Cote and Nightingale, 2012) and 'people's responses to natural hazards are part of their notions of how to successfully engage with both their physical and socio-cultural worlds (Dalisay and

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De Guzman, 2016, p.704). Studies have suggested that where strong social ties exist resilience is greater (Aldrich, 2012; Aldrich and Meyer, 2015; Bankoff, 2007). Resiliency has to be looked at through a community lens as "social norms, social capital and social networks in which individuals are embedded will determine disaster behaviour and the outcomes of a disaster" (Alcayna et al, 2016). Resilience then is about people, their social networks and the communities they live in, the environment they inhabit and positive adaptation. The following section outlines our choice of case study and data gathering strategies.

Data Gathering

Geographically, Tacloban is low lying, faces east towards the Pacific and experiences regular typhoons. Tacloban, as the largest and most devastated city in the region, became the focus of the relief effort in the aftermath of Yolanda and was therefore chosen as the case study for this article. Narratives of resilience and *bayanihan* referenced Tacloban more than any other area struck by Yolanda. The fact that Tacloban was the hometown of former first lady, Imelda Marcos, and that the Mayor of Tacloban was her nephew, simply fueled that exposure.

Poverty incidence in Tacloban was reported as 9.8 percent in 2012 (PSA, 2016a, pp. 2-17), much lower than the regional average of 31.4 percent (PSA, 2016b). However, there are pockets of deep poverty in the city especially in vulnerable coastal areas and the perception of relative affluence in the city encourages inward migration. These issues make Tacloban emblematic of wider trends of urbanisation and poverty that are evident in other demographically similar Asian cities that are vulnerable to comparable environmental hazards. Consequently, we can draw lessons from the social and material rehabilitation of Tacloban in order to inform future disaster rehabilitation practice in poor urban communities. However we are mindful that social capital and *bayanihan* as indicators of resilience are complex, dynamic, in some instances fleeting. Nevertheless, our critical analysis of the narratives of resilience, social capital and *bayanihan* can help to inform more accurate and responsible characterizations of social cohesion after mega-disasters.

The Philippine Local Government Code of 1991 (Republic Act 7160) legislated for a degree of decentralisation under which a system of Local Government Units (LGUs), e.g. provinces, cities and municipalities could enjoy a degree of administrative autonomy whilst still being accountable to the national government. Tacloban is one such LGU. LGUs are further sub-divided into barangays that are the smallest administrative unit in the Philippines run by elected officials. This article is based on evidence drawn from eight barangays in Tacloban of comparable size. The barangays chosen were predominantly 'most affected' by Yolanda as they are coastal and low lying. These barangays were located in three clusters in different areas of the city, Anibong (66 and 66-A), Magallanes (54 and 54-A), San Jose (87, 88 and 89) and Abucay (91). By investigating eight barangays, that suffered a similar degree of damage from the same disaster and were governed by the same City Hall, we will identify the factors that hindered or supported bonding social capital over time in similar but different localities.

We conducted 320 surveys (40 per barangay) in 2015, 2016 and 2017. The surveys included questions on self-help within the communities and self-perceptions of

resilience. By conducting surveys over time we were able to identify general trends in relation to how survivors viewed *bayanihan* within their communities. We also conducted a number of focus groups that targeted specific categories of resident such as women, the elderly and out of school youth and we interviewed two families in each barangay (16 in total) in 2015 and 2016 to get an in-depth understanding on how the recovery of these families was progressing.

We interviewed every barangay captain in 2015, 2016 and 2017, and in some cases also members of the barangay councils. Interviews were semi-structured and followed a series of questions that related to disaster relief and rehabilitation in the immediate and medium term. We were reflexive in our questions. When it became clear that certain issues, such as the haphazard distribution of some resources, were being mentioned on a repeat basis we adapted our strategy to incorporate repeat testing of these issues. We also cross-referenced our primary data with policy statements and independent observations as they relate to the relief effort.

Nevertheless, our results should be treated with caution as it was common for interviewees to contradict themselves. Saying for instance that they received sufficient aid in response to one question and later in the interview saying that they still needed more help. This could be put down to forgetfulness, survey fatigue or calculations or expectations of "reward or punishment for any reply" (De Ville de Goyet, 2008, p.42). We also found that survivors were prone to accepting relief goods even when they had no need for them, a primary example being fishing boats given to non-fishers. One can assume that aid agencies suffered from the same inconsistencies in self-assessments of need.

Resilience and Social Capital: Rhetoric and Reality

Before Yolanda struck the Philippines then President Benigno Aquino III called on Filipinos to "cooperate with the authorities and exercise '*bayanihan*'" (Tan, 2013) in light of the incoming typhoon. Subsequent to the disaster, numerous news agencies made reference to the *bayanihan* spirit in relation to local rehabilitation efforts (Viray, 2014; Castaneda, 2015) and donations and fundraising organised by the Filipino diaspora and the international community in general (GMA News Online, 2013; Abenoja and Lacamiento, 2014). International statesmen including then President Barack Obama (Obama, 2013) and Chief of the United Nations Commission for Refugees, Bernard Kerblat (Quismundo, 2013) also made reference to *bayanihan* as a national trait. *Bayanihan* then was being articulated not just as a form of bonding social capital evident between similar people in the same locality, it was also being articulated as a form of linking social capital capable of bringing diverse people together as part of the relief and rehabilitation effort.

There was an overarching view that *bayanihan*, as a system of trust, norms and networks would be in evidence as bonding social capital within communities. *Bayanihan* was also used to explain bridging networks between strangers that contributed financially or physically to the relief effort. This applied in terms of the simple donation of money or goods but in some cases it also resulted in volunteerism where people not related to the devastated communities offered their labour gratis e.g. the US based group All Hands Volunteers (All Hands Volunteers, 2018). On many occasions, we witnessed volunteers from this group digging drains and repairing

houses and barangay halls. To an extent, this foreign volunteerism also inspired the locals to become involved in the cooperative effort.

Another group, the Buddhist organisation Tzu Chi, took a slightly different approach to fostering aspects of *bayanihan* as they adopted "Cash for Work" programs where survivors were paid an allowance for clearing up their own neighbourhoods and later rebuilding houses. In an article on their website, the CEO of Tzu Chi Philippines, noted that the allowance they receive is "not a salary or a payment for their work…[t]his assistance is our money to help you recover from the tragedy" (Bolisay, 2013). As such, some locals viewed "Cash for Work" as a form of *bayanihan* when in reality the involvement of payment does not align with the traditional understanding of *bayanihan* as voluntary work.

Tzu Chi also gave unconditional cash transfers of between USD $270 to USD $400 based on family size (Ong et al., 2015, p.26). The large amounts and unconditional nature of the assistance was unlike the assistance offered by other humanitarian organizations which often came with conditions on expenditure. Many of our interviewees preferred this type of cash transfer over others as they felt it was fair. This type of assistance differed from "bonding" type arrangements that operates between families or friends because the cultural expectation would be that the money would be paid back or the favour be returned in the future. As a result, many of our interviewees and survey respondents cited Tzu Chi as the organisation that helped them the most. The forms of cooperation supported by organizations like All Hands and Tzu Chi pushed the geographical boundaries of *bayanihan* as goods and labour were given to strangers with no expectation of a return.

However, the survey data that we gathered in our selected barangays told a less optimistic story about community cooperation. 70 percent of survey respondents in 2015 reported that people in their community[4] helped each other 'if their household income was not enough' before Yolanda (with a yes or no option only). However post-Yolanda the numbers of respondents that reported meaningful help dropped significantly. The table below outlines the responses gathered over three years after Yolanda.

Table 1: To What Extent Did Your Community Help Itself After Yolanda?

	A lot	**Not much**	**Some**	**Did Not Help Itself**
2015	10.9	69.4	18.8	0.5
2016	3.1	48.8	25	23.1

2017	11.4	23.2	23.9	23.5

Nevertheless, it is interesting to compare these figures to the question "would you describe yourself as resilient post-typhoon Yolanda"? Those giving a positive response to the question numbered 62.5 percent in 2015, 69.2 in 2016 and 68.6 in 2017. These figures seem to indicate that the majority of survivors did consider themselves to be resilient however this feeling of resilience was not matched with confidence in self-help in communities that could be equated to bonding social capital or *bayanihan*. Nevertheless, survivors remain largely optimistic.

Community clean ups were cited in June 2017 focus groups as a way that communities came together to help each other. However, inefficient barangay captains and weak leadership were mentioned as an impediment to community cohesion. In general, focus group respondents and interviewees cited disaster preparedness as a form of resilience with poverty and a lack of livelihood being

equated to a lack of resilience. In 2015 (two years after Yolanda), all eight barangay captains cited the Tzu Chi Foundation as one of the groups that helped them the most in the aftermath of the disaster and on an ongoing basis. Virtually all our family interviewees also mentioned Tzu Chi as a primary or significant source of help and the organisation was credited with bringing about 'community cohesion'.

Tzu Chi was credited with setting an example to people in that they encouraged people to come together to clean up their own communities. However, this was not a perfect system as sometimes respondents claimed the "Cash for Work" was offered without them having to do the work. One barangay captain stated that those who did this were "the kind of people that if they get the money they have won" (Villanueva, 2015), in other words they were more interested in cash gain than community benefit. This is further evidence that while "Cash for Work" may look and feel like *bayanihan* to some of our interviewees, the incentives and driving factors behind the collective action do not resemble the traditional conceptualization of the principle.

The barangay captains told us that, in the immediate aftermath of the typhoon when their communities were effectively cut off from the outside world, they became self-policing. We were told that the barangay police, or *tanods*, were mobilised to keep the area safe and rotas were set up to keep fires burning at intersections during the night. We were told that "we were all helping each other at that time, there were no poor and no rich, we were all at the same level" (Ruterto, 2015). People also mobilised to collect their own dead for burial as the authorities were initially overwhelmed with the task before them (Bahin, 2015). From our family interview data, we were also able to establish that it was very common for people to share food and clothes in the immediate aftermath of the disaster. The clothes issue was an important one as people were sometimes left with only the clothes they were wearing, or even none at all, after the typhoon.

But responses from focus group discussions revealed that these acts of *bayanihan* and

collective action tended to be temporary. When asked "How would you describe community/barangay participation and cohesion after Yolanda?", different focus groups reported different answers. Six of the total 11 groups reported initial cooperation immediately after the typhoon. For instance, an elderly participant noted that: "Cooperation in the community was at its best immediately after Super Typhoon Yolanda. We were more sympathetic with each other. But it was only for about a month. Once we were back to our feet, we turned to being more individualistic". This sentiment was echoed by another participant, who said that "Immediately after Super Typhoon Yolanda, we helped each other. Now, it is to each his own". This sentiment was echoed by another participant who noted that: "People became friends after Yolanda but when relief operations started, there were again squabbles. Attitudes and behaviour worsened. It was as if people did not learn from the Yolanda experience".

Three focus groups cited an increase in community cohesion, noting that there was "better participation and cooperation" in the community, residents were "more helpful" and interacted more with each other, and in general were "more organised". However, two focus groups had purely negative views of community participation and cohesion. One participant said that "People in the barangay are back to being individualistic. Generally, they only show up if there is distribution of any assistance. Envy cannot be avoided".

Another issue that presented a problem for bonding social capital was that communities were disrupted and residents displaced by both Yolanda and the relocation programs that moved people away from the dangerous coastal areas. In Tacloban, this involved moving people into temporary housing and then permanent housing in "Tacloban North". For reasons beyond the scope of this article, relocation has been a protracted and problematic process (Iuchi and Maly, 2017; Ong, 2016). Whilst many interviewees stated that they were still in touch with their old neighbours "day to day", *bayanihan* cannot work over relatively long distances[5]. The captain of barangay 88 even reported that "established neighbours do not harm each other but because they were not neighbours before there has been a lot of trouble in the north" (Montalban, 2017) citing cases of arguing and even rape. Nevertheless, everyone that we interviewed supported the National Housing Authority raffle system (Roca, 2017) that allocates housing lots in the permanent relocation areas on a random basis. When we asked respondents whether they would not rather be near their old friends and neighbours, they responded that they did not trust the authorities to allocate the houses fairly.

Discussion

Our evidence indicates that the distribution of aid generated discontent in the communities. Even though aid agencies were meant to liaise with City Hall and the barangay captains to ascertain who was eligible for aid this did not always work well as checks were not made, records were lost or the barangays captains allegedly favoured friends and relatives over others. When asked if aid was distributed fairly key concerns of family interviewees were that the master lists of those eligible for aid drawn up by barangay captains were tampered with and that goods were not distributed fairly. In some cases, this led to simmering resentment within communities and whilst this can be dismissed as petty jealousy, the perception of unfairness or exclusion can also have a "profound effect on people's self-confidence and civic and

political connectedness" (Ong et al., 2015, p.42). As such, the inequitable approach used by NGOs and government officials for the allocation of relief goods and services undermined the growth of resilient and cohesive communities.

Our findings suggests people only "invest" in social capital/relationships because they have the expectation of some sort of return (Brisson, 2005, p.644). If that return is uncertain, the investment will not be made. Returns may be uncertain after the shock of a disaster and the inability of governments or relief agencies to set up credible flows of information or manage the distribution and use of resources inhibits bonding social capital. We discovered that the manner in which goods were distributed by some governmental and non-governmental relief agencies was dictated by programme time limits and the need to be "seen" by donors, the public and those in charge, to be doing something meaningful. This meant that, in some cases, the distribution of "visible" materials goods was prioritised over less visible tasks such as the comprehensive monitoring of the equitable allocation of goods and services. For this reason, our family respondents reported unease when barangay halls were rebuilt in new locations away from their homes as they were less able to monitor visitors and the potential distribution of goods on a first come first served basis.

Moreover, the visibility of aid itself, especially when selection and distribution were deemed to be inequitable by many in the community, was a source of invisible pain such as anxiety and resentment among excluded survivors. Our findings confirm the observations made by Ong et al. (2015) that vehicles, banner and posters with NGO logos were a common sight among affected communities and their presence often led to feelings of resentment among excluded survivors who felt the NGOs presence was a constant reminder of their exclusion. Issues of inclusion and exclusion were magnified within highly urbanized environments because the outcomes of unequitable aid are highly visible due to their close geographical proximity. Houses that were completely rebuilt were situated next door to houses that did not receive such relief and are either covered in tarpaulin or other scrapped goods.

Our results show that the reality on the ground was not as positive or socially cohesive as the persistent media, humanitarian and political rhetoric referencing resilience and the significance of *bayanihan* suggested. While a majority of barangay captains reported examples of *bayanihan* immediately after the disaster such as self-policing and sharing food and clothes, observations gave the overwhelming impression that the cooperative spirit was short-lived. We found that once the initial disaster and aftermath passed, people reverted to more individualistic behaviour. These findings are not surprising given that highly urbanized areas fuel individualism. This was also reflected in our results when a majority of respondents reported their community has "not helped itself much" in the years after Yolanda. As such, our findings show that both resilience and *bayanihan* were myths constructed in the aftermath of the typhoon to cover up and distract from the resentment of locals over the unequal distribution of aid and the social divisions they caused.

This contradiction was also evident in the way that survivors reported a lack of cohesion and self-help in communities whilst at the same time reporting individual resilience. This may have been because people did not want to self-report individual "weakness" or because they were socialised into a mindset of strength and endurance. It is also possible that negative coping strategies such as reduction in food intake,

tolerance of poor living conditions and increased debt were equated with resilience. But this contradiction also implies a lack of trust in reciprocated benefits from cooperative action. If social capital is seen as a market-based type of exchange then this market was disrupted by the inequitable distribution of relief goods and services.

Conclusion

The evidence above illustrates that notions of *bayanihan* after Yolanda were overstated. *Bayanihan* was a term that originated in farming communities. It worked within the rhythm of harvests and the weather and was based upon common expectations, benefits and trust. The urban poor will still invest in *bayanihan*, or bonding social capital, if returns are certain and "thick" trust prevails. However, the lack of transparency and perceived inequity that characterised the distribution of relief goods and services and the fragmentation of communities meant that returns became haphazard and uncertain. Consequently, social capital floundered as people resorted to cost benefit calculations of coordinated action.

Whilst the inequitable distribution of relief goods can cause hardship and distress in the first instance it can also undermine social cohesion. During disasters, existing social networks may be disrupted because of death and displacement and the norms, networks and trust that social capital relies on must be successfully reconfigured in order for bonding social capital to grow. This should be a priority for those tasked with disaster rehabilitation efforts, especially in poor communities.

We find that the pervasive rhetoric of resilience and *bayanihan* were "myths" that acted as a disclaimer and reduced these terms to a state of mind or even a national trait, regardless of the reality on the ground. As *bayanihan,* as a form of social resilience, is essentially distorted in the low-trust urban context and the fact that it was not that evident after the initial emergency phase is perhaps not that surprising. Doubtless there were many cases of survivors overcoming significant odds to regain their social and material well-being, however, resilience was also casually equated with negative coping strategies. Relief agencies need to dig deeper into what community resilience actually means and how they can foster positive outcomes in this regard.

For Tacloban, the inequitable distribution of aid changed urban poor communities for the worse, causing social divisions, conflict and further individualism. Consequently, the post-disaster context is a moving target. Resilience is not just about recreating the society that was destroyed or staying the same, it is about successful adaptation to a new post-disaster reality. In Tacloban that new reality was coloured by the experience of the inequitable distribution of aid. It was not just the physical impact of Yolanda that altered communities it was also the social impact of inequitable humanitarian action.

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[1]. Highly urbanized cities in the Philippines have a minimum of 200,000 inhabitants and an annual income of 50 million PHP based on 1991 constant prices.

[2]. In Tagalog resilience translates to *matibay,* which means strong and stable, as opposed to adaptive.

[3]. For instance, certain levels of corruption may be expected and tolerated, with problems only emerging when corrupt activities become excessive.

[4]. However, the distinction between family and community should be treated with caution as large extended families were the norm amongst barangay residents. This meant that the distinction between neighbor and relative was fluid.

[5]. The new settlements in the North are around 15 kms away from the coast.