

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **9444**



Introduced by Representative KAREN HOPE F. GARCIA

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The State, in fulfillment of its constitutional duty to protect life and property, must continuously strengthen its capacity to anticipate, prepare for, and respond to disasters. This commitment is aligned with Republic Act No. 10121, or the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010, as well as the Climate Change Act of 2009, as amended by Republic Act No. 10174. These laws underscore the urgency of addressing the root causes of vulnerability, mitigating the impacts of natural hazards, and mainstreaming climate change adaptation in local and national governance. Yet, despite this legal framework, recent events have demonstrated that community-level preparedness, particularly at the barangay level, remains inadequate in the face of increasingly severe and frequent climate-induced disasters.

In November 2025, Typhoon Tino (international name "*Kalmaegi*") and Super Typhoon Uwan (international name "*Fung-Wong*") struck the Philippines only days apart, revealing significant gaps in evacuation readiness and local disaster response. Combined fatalities reached close to 300 people, with reports documenting up to 297 deaths across affected regions¹. Cebu Province suffered one of the worst impacts, with Typhoon Tino alone claiming an estimated 150 fatalities, while 451 individuals sustained injuries. According to a report from the Office of Civil Defense (OCD), several communities also reported missing persons as authorities struggled to conduct search-and-rescue operations under rapidly deteriorating conditions.

The destruction extended beyond loss of life. Hundreds of thousands were displaced by widespread flooding, landslides, and structural damage throughout the Visayas and Luzon. Evacuation centers were quickly overwhelmed, and humanitarian

¹ Peralta-Malanzo. "Typhoon Tino Death Toll Rises to 269." SunStar, <https://www.sunstar.com.ph/cebu/typhoon-tino-death-toll-rises-to-269>

agencies reported urgent needs for water, sanitation, food, temporary shelter, and medical assistance. These events underscored how sudden, high-intensity disasters can strain both local and national capacities.

Economic losses further illustrate the magnitude of the crisis. Initial assessments on the amount of losses to agriculture and infrastructure in Negros Occidental jumped to P1.98 billion², while Cebu City reported at least ₱41 million³ in agricultural losses alone. Tens of thousands of farmers were affected, placing additional pressure on local economies. These figures are expected to rise as post-disaster evaluations continue.

The dual devastation caused by *Tino* in Central Visayas and *Uwan* in Northern and Eastern provinces in Luzon highlights the increasing likelihood of multiple destructive weather events occurring in close succession. Climate research group Greenpeace Philippines have warned that rising sea temperatures and intensifying rainfall patterns are consistent with accelerating climate change⁴. These trends reaffirm the need for proactive, localized disaster preparedness rather than reactive, last-minute response.

Given these realities, it is imperative to adopt more systematic and institutionalized mechanisms for preparing communities for disasters. Annual, community-level evacuation drills have proven effective in minimizing casualties during sudden-onset events. Regular rehearsals enable households, barangay volunteers, schools, and local responders to identify evacuation routes, assist vulnerable individuals, and execute coordinated responses with greater precision. Barangays with practiced protocols consistently report fewer casualties and faster mobilization during real emergencies.

Institutionalizing drills also prepares communities for the increasing likelihood of consecutive disasters. The back-to-back arrival of *Tino* and *Uwan* demonstrated how rapidly hazard events can overwhelm government resources. By strengthening barangay-level preparedness through trained evacuation teams, standardized protocols, and coordinated drills, communities become less dependent on overstretched national response units.

Economically, preparedness is far more cost-efficient than post-disaster reconstruction. The millions of pesos in agricultural and infrastructure losses recorded

² Talabong, Rambo. "Tino Damage to Negros' Agriculture, Infrastructure Jumps to P1.98 Billion." *The Philippine Star*, 16 Nov. 2025, <https://www.philstar.com/nation/2025/11/16/2487498/tino-damage-negros-agriculture-infrastructure-jumps-p198-billion>

³ "Losses to Tino Hit Agri in Cebu City Reach P47M." GMA Regional TV, <https://www.gmanetwork.com/regional/tv/news/111335/losses-to-tino-hit-agri-in-cebu-city-reach-p47m/story/>

⁴ "Uwan (Fung-Wong) Damages Surged by 30 Percent Due to Climate Change — Report." Greenpeace Philippines, <https://www.greenpeace.org/philippines/press/68725/uwan-fung-wong-damages-surged-30-percent-due-to-climate-change-report/>

this month alone underscore how early evacuation and asset protection can significantly reduce damages. Investments in preparedness such as training, drill implementation, hazard communication tools, and basic equipment, are minimal compared to the financial burden of rebuilding devastated communities and restoring livelihoods.

This proposed measure institutionalizes annual community evacuation drills in all barangays and requires LGUs to include these drills in their local DRRM plans. It strengthens planning, enhances responder training, establishes monitoring mechanisms through the NDRRMC, and ensures funding support through national and local DRRM allocations. It also promotes widespread public education on early warning systems and hazard-specific evacuation procedures. By empowering barangays, the measure ensures that disaster preparedness is systematic, consistent, and measurable.

Ultimately, this bill seeks to reduce loss of life, protect livelihoods, enhance community resilience, and align the country's disaster risk reduction agenda with national policies and international commitments.

In view of the foregoing, and with the urgent need to strengthen our national and local capacities in light of the severe impacts of Typhoons Tino and Uwan, the immediate passage of this measure is earnestly sought.



Rep. KAREN HOPE F. GARCIA
3rd District, Province of Cebu

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AN ACT
AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10121, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE
“PHILIPPINE DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND MANAGEMENT ACT OF 2010,”
BY INSTITUTIONALIZING A MANDATORY ANNUAL COMMUNITY-LEVEL
EVACUATION DRILL AND READINESS PROGRAM, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

Section 1. A new section, Section 12-A, is hereby inserted after Section 12 of Republic Act No. 10121, to read as follows:

"Section 12-A. *Institutionalization of Mandatory Annual Community Evacuation Drills.* - All barangays shall conduct at least one (1) community-level evacuation drill annually, based on the approved Barangay DRRM Plan (BDRRMP) and the Local DRRM Plan (LDRRMP) of the municipality or city.

The evacuation drill shall include:

- a. Activation and testing of early warning systems;
- b. Execution of hazard-specific evacuation routes;
- c. Assisted evacuation of vulnerable groups;
- d. Mobilization of BDRRMC response teams;
- e. Coordination with the Municipal/City DRRMO;
- f. Inspection and readiness verification of evacuation centers.
- g. Drills must be documented and conducted in accordance with NDRRMC guidelines.

The NDRRMC shall issue standardized guidelines detailing the annual schedule, minimum requirements, evaluation tools, simulation protocols, and

reporting templates for LGUs.”

Section 2. *Repealing clause.* All existing laws, orders, decrees, rules and regulations or parts thereof, inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby amended, modified or repealed accordingly.

Section 3. *Effectivity.* This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,