

# Breaking the Norms Public Journalism

**Red Batario**

Executive Director

Center for Community Journalism and Development



# Journalism's Primary Purpose

To provide citizens with the information they need to be free and self-governing

# Journalism's Quest



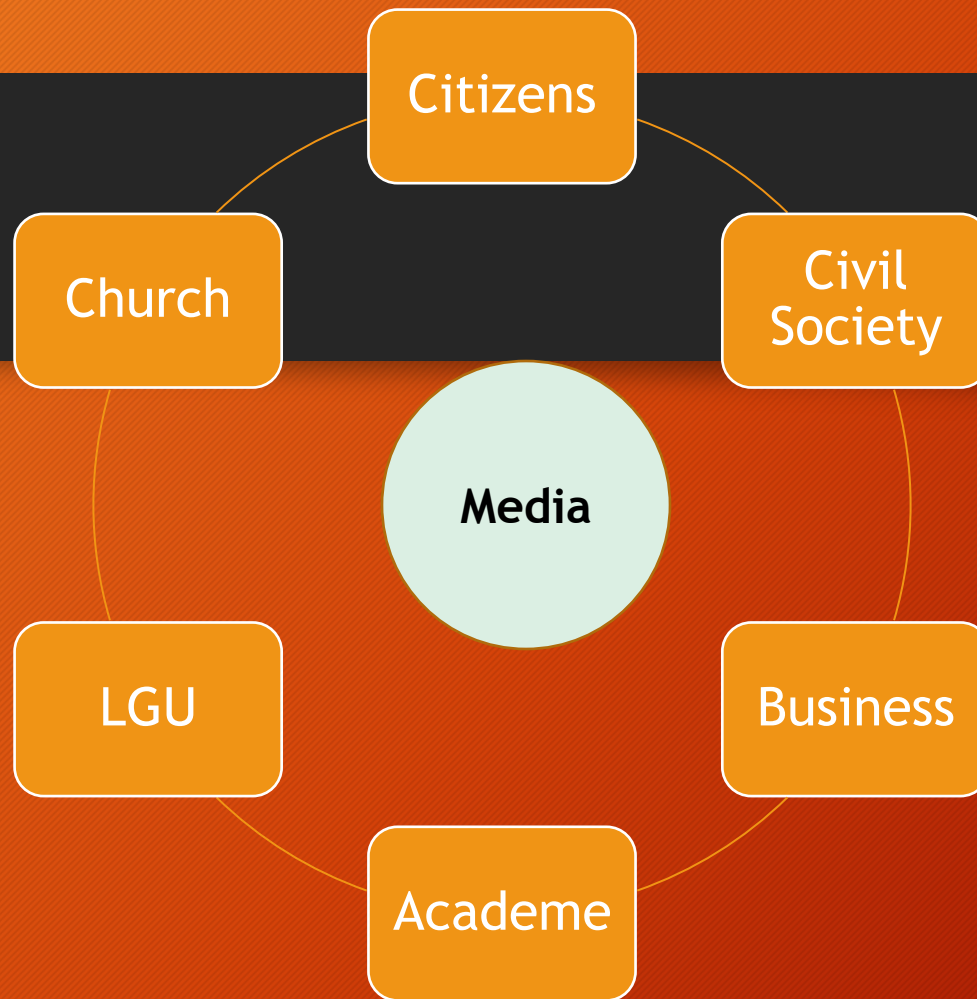
Uncover the truth, lift  
the veil of darkness,  
enable us to learn,  
guide us to better  
understanding of things  
and events that  
surround us

# Looking for the Connection

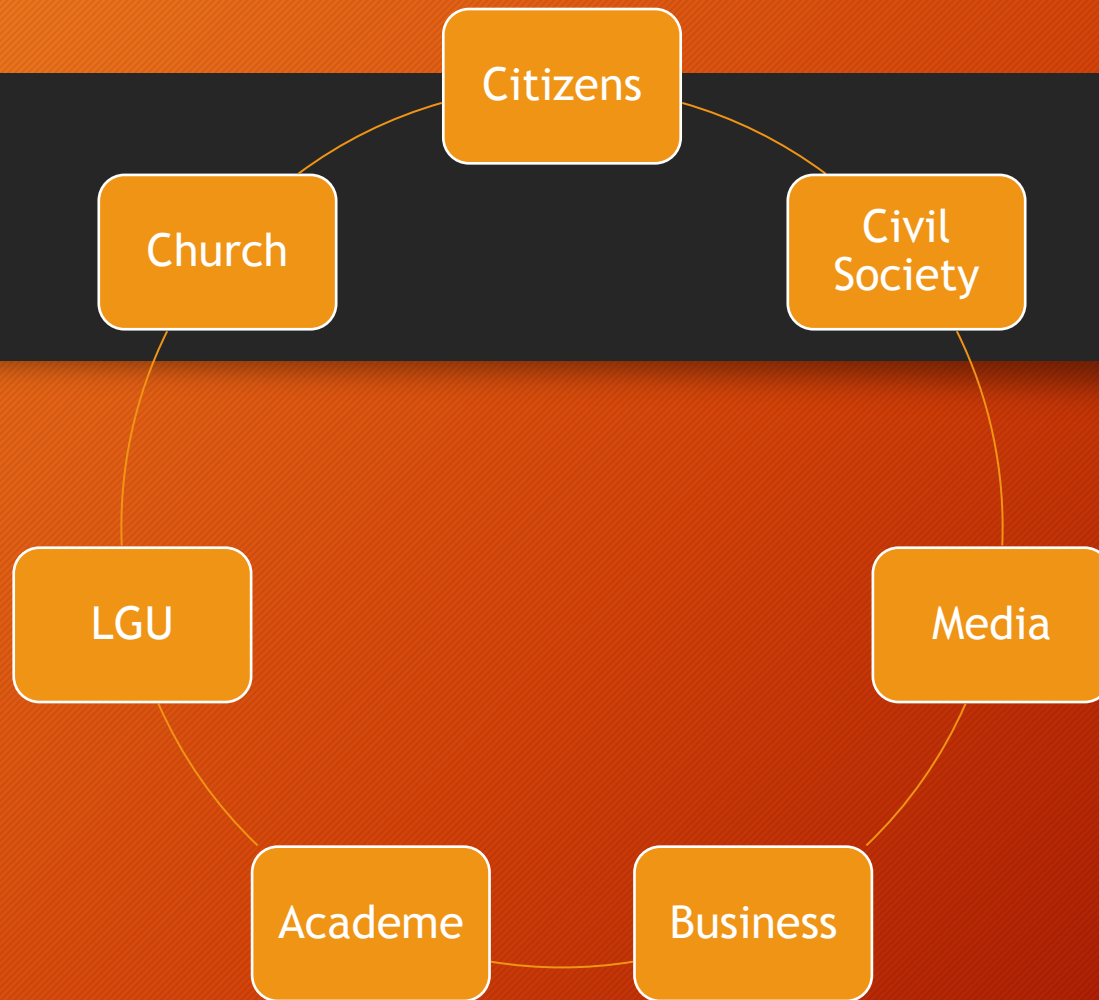
An approach to journalism that all those  
engaged in the craft should seriously think  
about

# The Press and the Community

- Journalists as citizens and stakeholders
- Readers and listeners as citizens
- Journalism as community-builder
- Community as arena for informed debate



# The Press in the Community



# The Press in the Community



Journalists  
must face the challenge



## *Media rarely report on...*

- Effects of massive displacement of peoples as result of disasters both natural and human-induced
- Impact on women, children, and vulnerable groups
- Community hopes, aspirations, and solutions

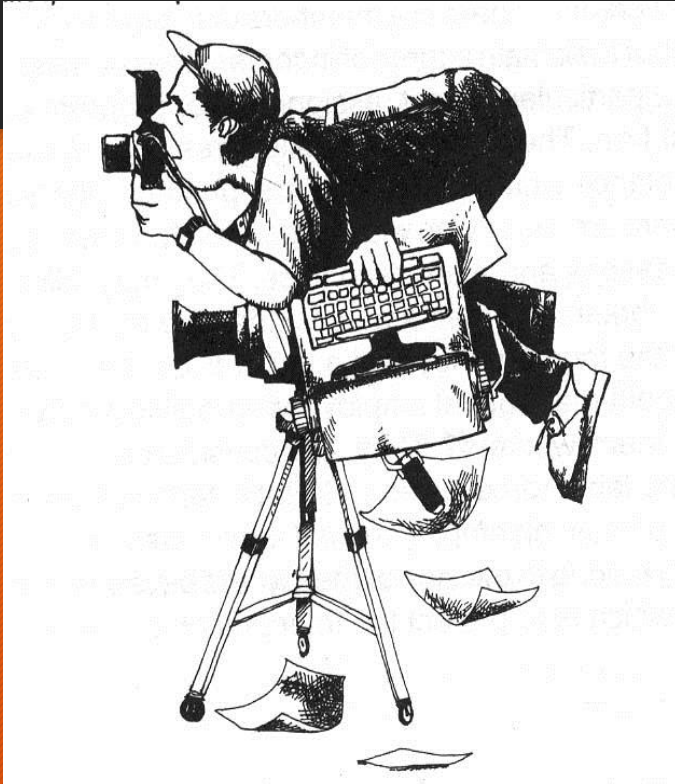
## *Media rarely report on...*

- Slow onset disasters such as drought and soil erosion
- Reasons for continuing armed conflict and recurring displacement
- Pre- and post-disaster situations

# Pluses and minuses

- Focus on local issues
- Accessible to citizens
- Community member
- Availability
- Ethical questions
- Poor working conditions
- Personal rivalry
- Partisan politics

# Public Journalism



A new way of thinking about the craft, a philosophy that says journalism should not be passive

# Why Public Journalism?

- Disengagement by citizens from public life
  - Evaporation of civic culture
- Disconnection between media and citizens

# Why Public Journalism?

- Need for people to make sense of what is happening around them
- For people to see how they can play a role
  - See how they can make a difference

# What it is not

- Journalists alone setting the news agenda
- Conflict-driven
- Tell only of problems
- Coverage of prominence
- Scoop-oriented
- Easy

# What it is

- A commitment supported by a set of tools
- An attitude and a set of values
- Something that journalists must want to do
- Does not forget the basics
- Debunks the myth that the journalist is a Lone Ranger
- Situates the journalist as a community member



# What it does

- Encourages citizens to think more clearly about issues
- Increases public discussion in the community



# What it does

- Strengthens a sense in leaders and citizens alike that they could solve local problems
- Invigorates citizen participation



# What it requires of journalists

- Bring in more voices in the news coverage and story
- Rethink their roles
- Devise mechanisms for citizens to engage in debate
- Do in-depth, tough reporting

# What it requires of journalists

- Report important news of success and hope
- Examine and report what's wrong...and also what's working
- Report on problems...and how these can be solved
- Commitment over the long-term

# Problem Solving Reporting

- **Show that a problem can be solved:** To maintain objectivity, journalists sometimes avoid proposing solutions to problems they find in the field. But this can leave readers feeling helpless and unsatisfied: Why should they be forced to read about a disaster when they can't do anything about it? So when I met Mang Ando who left his village after it was obliterated by Typhoon Yolanda, I asked him: What did he need? He answered that getting a few tools to make handicrafts he could sell in the market would make a real difference. A hammer and drill wouldn't address the disaster that had displaced him, but it would give his story at least a glimmer of hope. That others like him can move forward.

# What its assumptions are

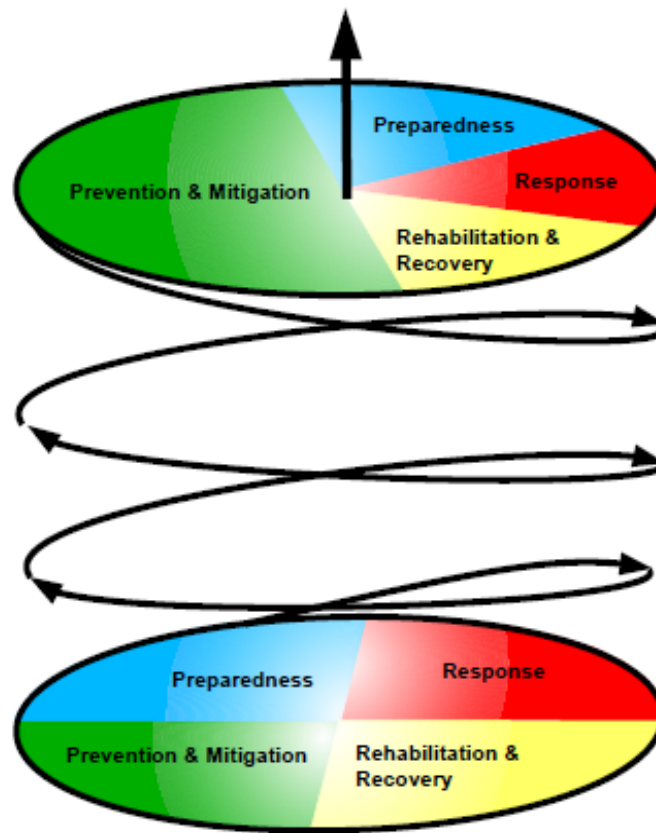
- Self-government greatly depends on citizen participation to enrich public life
- Journalists can work toward more effective self-government without sacrificing their cherished values and traditions

# National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Framework

Safer, adaptive and disaster resilient Filipino communities toward sustainable development

## RISK FACTORS

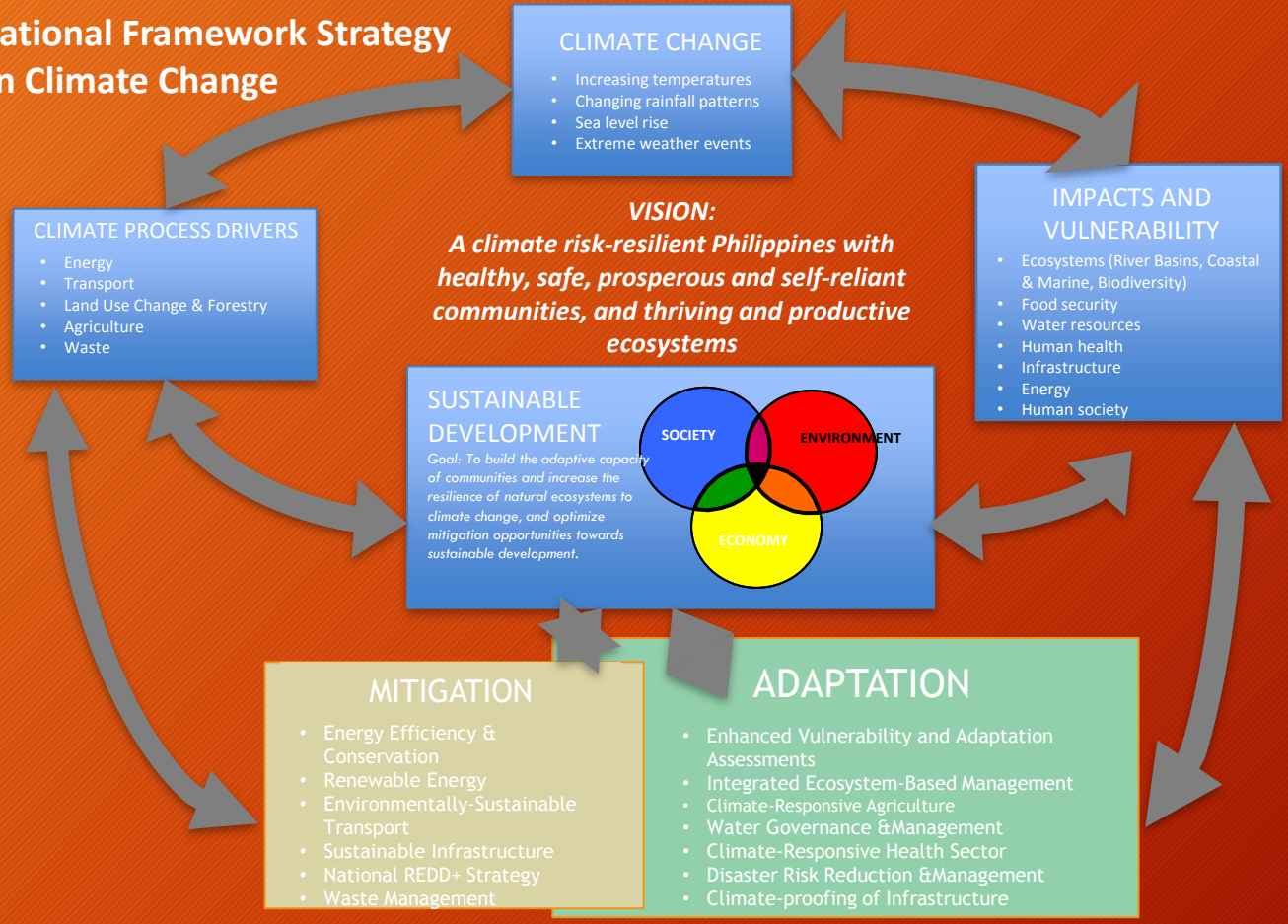
Hazards  
Exposures  
Vulnerabilities  
Capacities



Mainstreaming  
DRR and CCA in  
Planning and  
Implementation



# National Framework Strategy on Climate Change



Capacity Development    Knowledge Management    IEC and Advocacy    Gender Mainstreaming    Research and Development Technology Transfer

**CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGIES**

Multi-stakeholder Partnerships    Financing    Valuation    Policy, Planning and Mainstreaming

**MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION**



# What is community-based disaster risk reduction and management?

- Is a process of disaster risk reduction and management in which at-risk communities are actively engaged in the identification, analysis, treatment, monitoring, and evaluation of disaster risks in order to reduce their vulnerabilities and enhance their capacities
- This means the people are at the heart of decision-making and implementation of disaster risk reduction and management activities. The involvement of the most vulnerable is paramount and the support of the least vulnerable is necessary. In CBDRRM, the local and national governments are also involved and supportive.

# What is community-based disaster risk reduction and management?

CBDRRM aims to create **resilient people** living within resilient communities within resilient environments within resilient countries. This is achieved by reducing the:

- 1. Probability of failure through risk reduction measures;
- 2. Consequences of failure, in terms of fewer lives lost, fewer injuries and reduced direct and indirect damage;
- 3. Time needed for recovery; and the
- 4. Patterns of vulnerability that can develop during the process of reconstruction.

# Community-based disaster risk reduction and management (key principles)

- **People centered**
- **Participation & partnership**
- **multi-sectoral/multi-disciplinary**
- **Development oriented**
- **Comprehensive & integrated**
- **Micro-macro link**
- **Mutual learning & enabling**
- **culture & gender sensitive**

# All of us need light



To see things, to  
know and  
understand, and  
to be able to  
make decisions

Public Journalism may not  
have all the answers

But it can help light the way