



ONE ASEAN
ONE RESPONSE

THE COLUMN

THE AHA CENTRE NEWS BULLETIN

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Children play on a flooded lotus field in
Mekong delta, Viet Nam, Dec 2016.

HIGHLIGHT

The 9th ASEAN-ERAT
Induction Course

MONTHLY DISASTER OUTLOOK

Monthly Disaster Review and
Outlook April 2018

THE OTHER SIDE

H.E. Ursula Mueller
United Nations Assistant
Secretary-General for
Humanitarian Affairs and
Deputy Emergency
Relief Coordinator

THE COLUMN

38

THIS ISSUE: The 9th ASEAN-ERAT
Induction Course



HIGHLIGHT

04

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MONTHLY DISASTER OUTLOOK

06

INSIGHT

08

PARTNERSHIP

10



AHA CENTRE DIARY

12

THE OTHER SIDE

14

GO

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EDITOR'S NOTE

AHA CENTRE'S THE COLUMN IS BACK



ONE **ASEAN**
ONE **RESPONSE**

HI READERS,

The month of May is already upon us, and with it comes Volume 38 of the AHA Centre's Column. There is never any shortage of action here in ASEAN's key body for disaster management coordination, and in this month's volume we will give you a sneak-peek into what has been happening around the region in the disaster management sector.

April 2018 saw ASEAN's emergency response capacity take another great step forward, with the implementation of the 9th ASEAN-ERAT training course inducting a group of new emergency responders into this integral programme. Our Main Highlight section takes a look at the course's progress, as well as the unique context within which the all-important simulation exercise was conducted. We also have some great insight into other key trainings and workshops for disaster management that took place in April, with the AHA Centre Diary focusing on the Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination (UN-CMCOORD) training as well as the Incident Command System and Incident Action Planning Workshops.

The Other Side interview with H.E. Ursula Mueller, the Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator of UNOCHA highlights the integral working partnerships between the AHA Centre and United Nations, while this month's Partnerships section takes a look at all-important civil society engagement through one of the AHA Centre's key strategic partners – the AADMER Partnership Group (APG).

To top things off we highlight the key elements of the disaster context in Viet Nam, to further understand the interesting elements that cause the region to be highly prone to natural disaster. While this is just a snippet of all that has been happening throughout the last month here at the AHA Centre, hopefully it provides you, the readers, with great insight into the importance of ASEAN disaster management coordination as a single, united ASEAN region.

Sincerely yours,

The Column Editorial Team.



EDITOR IN CHIEF
Ms. Adelina Kamal

THE EDITORIAL TEAM

MANAGING EDITOR
Shintya Kurniawan

JOURNALIST
Carla Budiarto, Grace Endina, Mizan Bisri, Qing Yuan Pang

PUBLISHED BY
The AHA Centre

EDITOR
William Shea

CREATIVE DIRECTOR
Yohan Andreas

GRAPHIC DESIGNER
Denis Indra Permana

PHOTOGRAPHER
Dandi Rahman



THE 9TH ASEAN-ERAT INDUCTION COURSE

Ten years since its first ASEAN-ERAT deployment – to support the response to Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar – the AHA Centre conducted its 9th ASEAN-ERAT Induction Course from the 26th of March until the 1st of April 2018, in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar. With outstanding support from the Department of Disaster Management of Myanmar (DDM) as the host, the course was attended by 31 participants from nine of the ten ASEAN Member States. Participants came from an array of backgrounds, including National Disaster Management Organisations, Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Civil Society Organisations, Youth Groups, the ASEAN Secretariat, ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve (APTERR), and the AHA Centre itself. The 9th ASEAN-ERAT Induction Course was officially opened with an inspiring speech by Dr. Win Myat Aye, the Union Minister of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement of Myanmar.



One of the key features of the 9th course was the simulation exercise scenario – which engaged one of the ASEAN Contingency Plans for large scale disaster – namely a 7.2 magnitude earthquake in Metro Manila. Using this contingency plan scenario, the simulation exercise increased the feeling of authenticity for participants as they performed the ASEAN-ERAT core functions, including rapid damage and needs assessments and incoming ASEAN relief item facilitation. They also enacted the provision of on-site coordination support to the affected country's local authorities, namely through the facilitation of coordination meetings between a range of ground-level stakeholders.

The simulation exercise also allowed ASEAN-ERAT participants to develop their working relationships with the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team, as part of the continued development of inter-operability between the Joint Operations and Coordination Centre of ASEAN (JOCCA) and the UN On-site Coordination Centre. Other components including personnel and team safety and security, as well as working with media were also tested during the simulation exercise. By simulating this response as part of the ASEAN-ERAT course, the

AHA Centre has further enhanced the streamlining and capacity of ASEAN-ERAT within the ASEAN Contingency Plan development process.

Of particular note was the enthusiasm and spirit of the participants to deliver results during the non-stop, 48-hour simulation exercise. Given its intensity, the diversity of participants' backgrounds, and varying skills across the different nationalities, the final results were considerably strong. These diversities and challenges were raised throughout the debrief session, often identified as considerable factors in shared-learning and strengthening the team.

Participants also valued the engagement of a range of external parties, including the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), the International Red Cross/Crescent Societies (IFRC), Map Action, Télécoms Sans Frontières, and Myanmar Red Cross amongst others, which provided them the opportunity to familiarise themselves with other key actors who would work alongside them in the field. This also allowed participants to see the importance of stakeholder engagement in achieving the vision of One ASEAN, One Response within the ASEAN-ERAT programme.



The successful completion of the 9th ASEAN-ERAT Induction Course, supported by the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF), alongside other previously-mentioned implementation partners, sees a current pool of 252 ASEAN-ERAT members across the region. Graduates were inaugurated during the Closing Ceremony by Ms. Adelina Kamal, Executive Director of the AHA Centre, together with the Deputy Minister of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement of Myanmar, Dr. U Soe Aung and Director General of DDM of Myanmar, Dr. Ko Ko Naing.

“

“We believe that the benefit of the ASEAN-ERAT goes beyond disaster response and that, because the ERAT teams are composed of government and NGO staff, participants are able to learn skills and get awareness of technologies and practices to take home and use in their current and future projects” – **Sebastien Latouille, Delegate of Télécoms Sans Frontière.**

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“All of the new graduates should feel a great sense of pride. This very demanding course tested each of them and they all came through!” – **Oliver Lacey-Hall, Head of UN-OCHA Indonesia/ASEAN Liaison Office.**

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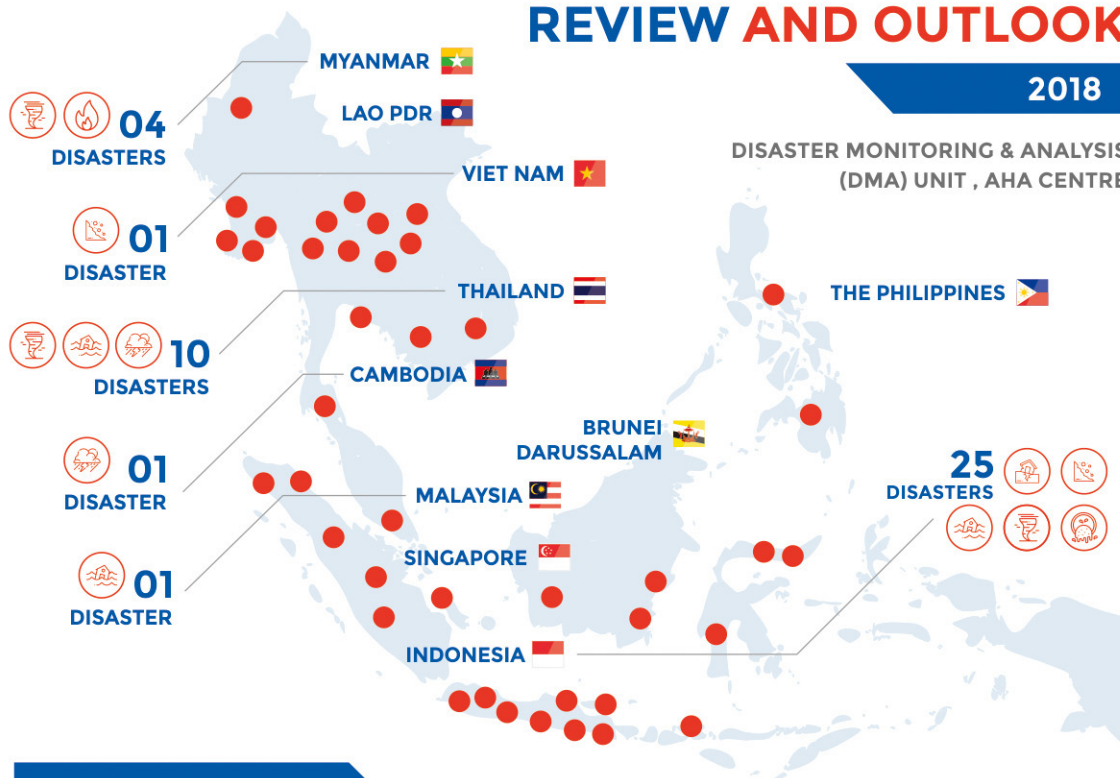
“During the training, we made mistakes under the stress of the situation. But we could correct our mistakes and overcome the stress by working together and supporting each other as a team. We really appreciate the patience of our facilitators and mentors, for teaching us, for staying with us in the SimEx and sharing your knowledge and expertise with us” – **Chan Nyein Thu, ASEAN-ERAT member Batch 9, Department of Disaster Management, Myanmar.**

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MONTHLY DISASTER REVIEW AND OUTLOOK

2018

DISASTER MONITORING & ANALYSIS
(DMA) UNIT, AHA CENTRE

REGIONAL TALLY

	2018	2017
• Total of recorded-significant disasters	42	18
• Number of deaths	32	22
• Number of injured people	128	8
• Number of missing people	0	0
• Number of Internally Displaced People (IDP)	4,420	30,506
• Number of affected people	1,013,095	52,936
• Affected houses (collapsed & damaged)	9,143	2,421

(covering the period of April 2018; Week 14-17)

DISCLAIMER

AHA Centre's estimation is based on data and information shared by National Disaster Management Organisation (NDMOs) and other relevant agencies from ASEAN Member States, international organisations and news agencies. For each recorded-significant disaster, description and detail of data and information are available at: <http://adinet.ahacentre.org/reports>.

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF APRIL 2018

Flood and wind-related disasters had by far the highest number of occurrences during April 2018. ASEAN should remain prepared as changes in seasonal and weather patterns occur, increasing the probability and varying impact of hydro-meteorological disasters. According to the ASEAN Specialised Meteorological Centre (ASMC), the northern ASEAN region continued through its traditional dry season, while wetter conditions were experienced in the south of the region, as the monsoon through and its associated rain-band settled close to the Equator. Hailstorms were a notable phenomenon last month in Lao PDR and North-Eastern Thailand, resulting in adverse impacts on power lines, infrastructure and agriculture.

22 moderate-to-strong earthquakes (> M 5.0) were observed across Indonesia, Myanmar and the Philippines during the month, causing minor disruptions locally, but without significant humanitarian impact. One notable event was the M 4.4 earthquake reported in Banjarnegara, Indonesia, with the shallow quake centre and the area's loose soil conditions causing severe damage to 465 houses (57.8% suffered partial to total collapse).

Technological disasters also took place during April, most notably a range of landfill fires in Myanmar that threatened the health and livelihoods of significant

numbers of residents in nearby areas. Significant numbers of people were affected by fumes resulting from these fires, with residents living close to the landfill site experiencing the worst conditions. Starting on the 21st of April, smoke from the fires covered 20 townships across Yangon, with an increased likelihood of adverse health effects – particularly for children and the elderly – experienced by almost 800,000 people within a 30 km radius of the fires.

OUTLOOK FOR MAY-JUNE 2018

The region is expected to gradually transition from the current Northeast Monsoon conditions, to the inter-monsoon conditions in May 2018 - in which low-level winds in the region are generally light and variable in direction, with an increase in shower activities to be expected. Some parts of the northern ASEAN region may continue to experience dry conditions in May 2018, but are likely to ease off with an increase in shower activities as the inter-monsoon period takes hold. For the southern ASEAN region, shower activities are expected over most parts of the area.

For the rest of the April-May-June 2018 season, the northern ASEAN region is likely to experience near-normal rainfall levels, aside from coastal areas of the Andaman Sea and the Philippines, where there is an increased chance of above-normal rainfall. In the southern ASEAN region, slightly below-normal to near-normal rainfall can be expected.

DISASTER COMPARISON IN NUMBERS

WHITE BAR | 2017 RED BAR | 2018

Earthquake	2	1	Cambodia	-	1
Flood	10	14	Indonesia	8	25
Landslide	0	4	Malaysia	2	1
Storm	4	6	Myanmar	1	4
Wind	2	14	The Philippines	3	-
Volcano	-	-	Thailand	-	10
Oil Spill	-	2	Viet Nam	2	1
Wild Fire	-	1	Total	2	42
Total	18	42			

Data sources: ASEAN Specialised Meteorological Centre, United States Geological Survey



VIET NAM

VIET NAM STANDS AS ONE OF THE MOST DISASTER-PRONE COUNTRIES IN THE ASEAN REGION, WITH OVER 70% OF ITS DENSE POPULATION (ALMOST 100 MILLION PEOPLE) OFTEN FACING THE ADVERSE IMPACTS OF DISASTER – IN PARTICULAR DUE TO HYDROLOGICAL EVENTS. VIET NAM'S GEOGRAPHICAL LAYOUT, POPULATION DISTRIBUTION, INCREASED URBANISATION AND HIGH NUMBERS OF VULNERABLE POPULATIONS CREATE A CONTEXT FOR POTENTIAL HIGH-IMPACT EVENTS WITHIN THE NATION'S BORDERS, WHILE CLIMATE CHANGE IS ALSO NOTED AS HAVING AN INCREASING INFLUENCE ON THE EXTREMITY OF NATURAL DISASTERS IN VIET NAM.

Flooding In Hoi An, The World Heritage Site Of Viet Nam. Photo taken at Hoi An ancient town, Quang Nam Province, Viet Nam.



Viet Nam's central and southern regions are particularly vulnerable to natural disaster events; however, its diverse landscape and topography ensure that all parts of the country are at high risk of natural disaster. The country is formed by mountainous areas,

river deltas, highlands, islands and over 3,000km of coastline, with its tropical location causing monsoons, storms, floods and other events to strike the nation on a yearly basis. Viet Nam experiences both the northeast and southeast monsoon-winds, with its geographic layout meaning the nation is home two distinct climatic regions. All regions face extremely high rainfall levels, accentuated by a large system of rivers and deltas, resulting in ongoing vulnerability to flooding and other hydrological disasters.



FLOOD

Due to high rainfall, extreme weather occurrences, as well as the vast array of river and deltas across the nation, flood is one of the major types of disaster that affects Viet Nam's

population. The Northern river systems and basins account for over 75% of the north's land area, resulting in multiple flooding events each year. Meanwhile in the Mekong river delta, floods are often generated from upstream events, resulting in inundation of the delta for months at a time. These events can have a severe impact on river-based communities – often threatening the lives, homes and livelihoods of the people who inhabit the river banks. Flash floods and mud floods also have great impact on mountain-based communities, caused by heavy rains and bad drainage systems. Such floods often strike communities across all four mountainous areas of Viet Nam, namely the north, central, central highlands and south-eastern regions.



TYPHOON

Due to its location north-west of the Pacific Ocean, Viet Nam is one of the most storm-prone land masses in the world. Numbers of

violent typhoons have continued to increase over recent decades, with the nation experiencing 10 to 15 typhoon events on average each year, historically affecting all geographic regions of Viet Nam. It is estimated that typhoons impact over 70% of Viet Nam's population, with not only the initial storm, but the following heavy rains and floods also having an adverse effect on the nation's communities.



LANDSLIDE AND EROSION

Landslide and erosion are also a common occurrence in Viet Nam, causing

considerable losses to homes and agricultural land across the nation. Various natural and human activities cause such events, resulting in erosion to river banks, coastal areas, and multitudes of landslides on mountains and hillsides.

Viet Nam also experiences a range of other natural disasters across its landscapes, which although may pose limited short-term risk to human life, have an extensive impact on infrastructure, services and livelihoods within communities. Issues related to inundation are common, as are the impacts of drought and desertification. Cyclones are also an ongoing phenomenon, increasing in frequency with a changing climate.

Written by : William Shea



All information sourced from 'Viet Nam Disaster Management Reference Handbook: 2015', as developed by the Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (CFE-DM).



AADMER

Partnership Group (APG)

THE AADMER PARTNERSHIP GROUP (APG) IS A CONSORTIUM OF SEVEN INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS, FORMED TO SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ASEAN AGREEMENT ON DISASTER MANAGEMENT AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE (AADMER). THE APG WORKS WITH THE ASEAN COMMITTEE ON DISASTER MANAGEMENT (ACDM) AND ITS WORKING GROUPS, THE AHA CENTRE, AND THE ASEAN SECRETARIAT, AIMING TOWARDS A "PEOPLE-CENTRED IMPLEMENTATION OF AADMER". IT UNDERTAKES THIS FUNCTION BY RAISING AWARENESS OF AADMER, AND BY FACILITATING THE ENGAGEMENT OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS THROUGHOUT AADMER DISCUSSIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION. CURRENTLY, THE APG OPERATES IN SEVEN ASEAN MEMBER STATES, NAMELY, CAMBODIA, INDONESIA, LAO PDR, MYANMAR, THE PHILIPPINES, THAILAND AND VIET NAM. THE APG'S MEMBERS COMPRISE OF REPRESENTATIVES FROM CHILD FUND INTERNATIONAL, HELPAGE INTERNATIONAL, MERCY MALAYSIA, OXFAM, PLAN INTERNATIONAL, SAVE THE CHILDREN INTERNATIONAL, AND WORLD VISION INTERNATIONAL.

Symbol of shaking hands together for ASEAN Day



Dr. Heng Aik Chen of MERCY Malaysia shares about APG during One ASEAN One Response Workshop in March 2018.

The APG forms the bridge between ASEAN's work in disaster management and the key stakeholders within civil society organisations – whose proximity and reach with local communities forms a key element of all disaster management processes. Through a working partnership with the APG, the AHA Centre (and other ASEAN bodies) can ensure increased participation and understanding within the communities they serve. Since 2009, the AADMER Partnership Group has been working closely alongside the ACDM and its Working Groups, the ASEAN Secretariat, and the AHA Centre, on the implementation of AADMER for the ASEAN region. During these early years, ASEAN governments and the APG identified proposed areas of partnership between ASEAN and civil society organisations – including in disaster risk assessment and early warning – as well as practical actions towards preparedness, prevention and mitigation of disaster.

Written by : Carla Budiarto | Photo : AHA Centre

The APG works with the AHA Centre throughout a range of its programmes and process developments, ensuring the all-important community engagement aspect is present throughout the AHA Centre's efforts. APG members have also been very active in supporting the ASEAN Emergency Response and Assessment Team (ERAT) programme, as well as sending representatives to take part in the ASEAN ERAT trainings either as participants, trainers or observers. The APG often collaborates with the AHA Centre during disaster response, providing great support within a number of response efforts such as Typhoon Haiyan in 2013, and the Myanmar floods in 2015.

The group also played a key role in the AHA Centre's development of a lessons learned document after Typhoon Haiyan. The involvement of the APG ensured valuable and relevant local insight and feedback within this outcome. Currently, the APG – in consultation with the AHA Centre – are developing a concept note on a Regional Alliance for Collective Emergency Response (RACER), under the CSO Partnership Framework (ACPF), and as part of the implementation of the AADMER Work Programme 2016-2020.

Dr. Heng Aik Cheng of MERCY Malaysia, and the Chair of the APG, emphasised the importance of the partnership during the recent One ASEAN One Response workshop in Jakarta, stating that the strength of civil society organisations lies in their proximity with populations affected by disaster. Staff from such organisations speak the local language, and are best placed to deliver important information and engage local stakeholders in the early stages of emergencies. Such a context is also highly valuable for preparedness engagements, therefore underlying the importance of partnerships such as seen between the APG and AHA Centre.



HUMANITARIAN CIVIL-MILITARY COORDINATION (UN-CMCOORD) TRAINING

BENGKULU, 5-10 APRIL 2018

On 5th–10th of April 2018, the AHA Centre participated in a Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination (UN-CMCOORD) training, conducted on-board the US Naval Hospital Ship (USNS) Mercy in Bengkulu, Indonesia. The training was implemented by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) alongside the United States Pacific Fleet.

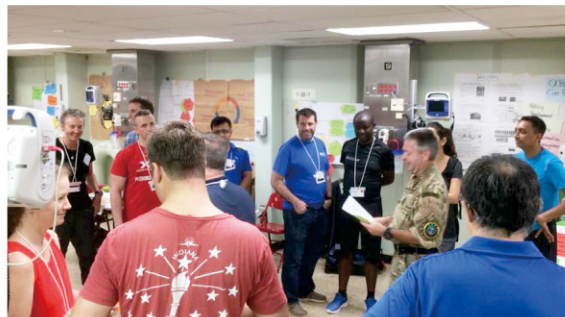
As military institutions often play a significant role within emergency responses, there is a real need to foster meaningful collaboration between military actors, civilians, and other international humanitarian organisations. This sees UNOCHA facilitating trainings such as the UN-CMCOORD on a regular basis across the world. The training's underlying principle is to create and share common understanding for the facilitation of the right assistance, to the right people, at the right time, and using the most appropriate methods during emergency response. The training included a variety of modules, such as coordination and sharing of resources, protection of civilians, and the security of humanitarian aid workers – an effort that has developed the global #NotATarget campaign.

The participants in the UN-CMCOORD training held a range of diverse backgrounds. Alongside military representatives and UNOCHA staff, representatives from non-governmental organisations, National Disaster Management Organisations, regional organisations, and the International Red Cross/Crescent Societies were also involved. However, this event stands as the first time such a training was conducted on a military vessel. The USNS Mercy was originally an oil tanker, redeveloped into a military medical hospital, complete with a surgery operation room for humanitarian assistance and disaster response operations.

"I found the environment and direct exposure to military responses throughout the training as a very insightful experience. Furthermore, the content on liaising, communicating and facilitating dialogues between civilian and military actors during emergency operations is also very crucial in the region, as military actors often are the first responders in emergency situations," stated Janggam Adhityawarma, Assistant Director of Preparedness and Response, and the AHA Centre's representative at the training.



Participants of the training onboard the USNS Mercy.



Brainstorming session with a fun learning approach.

Written by : Shintya Kurniawan | Photo : AHA Centre

INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM AND INCIDENT ACTION PLANNING WORKSHOPS

JAKARTA, 16 – 27 APRIL 2018

During April 2018, the AHA Centre, with the support of the United States Forest Service (USFS), successfully conducted intensive trainings regarding the Incident Command System and Incident Action Planning.

The Incident Command System (ICS) model, first developed in the 1970s in the aftermath of wildfires in California and Arizona, encourages the use of a standardised management system to enable a synergised inter-agency collaboration when responding to an emergency. To date, ICS has been developed and adjusted to address various complexities and types of emergency responses, including during the first attack of the World Trade Centre in 1993. Alongside this, ICS is also applicable for managing non-emergency situations – such as public events which attract massive crowds – including sporting events, annual festivals, parades and concerts.

While ICS covers the basic principles of cross-sectoral coordinating mechanisms, Incident Action Planning (IAP) provides in-depth knowledge for the planning department of the AHA Centre whenever a need for disaster-response arises. The IAP trainings involved case studies in which the AHA Centre's staff were challenged to practice their skills, use their creativity, and draw on their knowledge to develop strategies to address various disaster scenarios, including landslides, floods, and fires. The evolving scenarios required continuous efficient response plans, factoring in analysis from available resources, logistical aspects, and also safety and security.



Ellie from USFS facilitates the discussion between staff of the AHA Centre.



One of the group tasks is to come up with immediate response plan for a landslide incident.

Both ICS and IAP have been adapted and utilised by the AHA Centre since its establishment as the coordinating agency for humanitarian assistance in Southeast Asian region. The dynamic nature of ICS has been effective for the Centre's emergency operations, due to its flexibility and adjustability to suit a range of responses. The ICS system has also been adapted and is currently used by five ASEAN Member States, creating coordination and a common ground for the ever-growing regional collaborations in managing disasters.



THE OTHER SIDE

H.E. Ursula Mueller

United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for
Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator

IN EARLY APRIL 2018, THE AHA CENTRE HAD THE HONOUR OF MEETING H.E. URSULA MUELLER, THE UN'S ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS AND DEPUTY EMERGENCY RELIEF COORDINATOR, WHO HAS BEEN A STRONG SUPPORTER OF GLOBAL HUMANITARIAN AND DEVELOPMENT AFFAIRS FOR OVER 30 YEARS. MS. MUELLER HAS DEVELOPED AN EXTENSIVE RANGE OF EXPERIENCES IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, THROUGH HER PREVIOUS ROLES AS GERMANY'S CIVIL COORDINATOR IN KOSOVO, GERMANY'S SPECIAL ENVOY TO AFGHANISTAN, DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL AT GERMANY'S MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, AND DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF GERMANY'S MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT.



She has also served as a member of the Advisory Board of the United Nations' Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), as well as to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNWRA). Furthermore, her leadership in the role German Executive Director to the Board of Executive Directors of the World Bank Group between 2014 to 2017, resulted in stronger ties between the World Bank and the United Nations (UN).

Having the opportunity to engage with Assistant Secretary-General Mueller during her visit to the home of One ASEAN One Response in Jakarta, the Column's editorial team gained valuable insights on regional and international cooperation for the provision humanitarian assistance. The humanitarian affairs partnership between ASEAN and the UN has progressed throughout the past 10 years, particularly after the devastation of Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar during 2008. Ms. Mueller stressed that ASEAN, the UN, and other global humanitarian stakeholders can deliver better results through working together.

During the discussion, Ms. Mueller highlighted the key strength of disaster management in the ASEAN region – namely the presence of a formal mandate, agreed-upon by all Member States. "You have a platform in which ten leaders have signed the Declaration on One ASEAN One Response. It gives you a very strong mandate to be relevant," she said. "However, delivering on that mandate requires political support, financial support, and resources. Not only financial resources, but also relevant skills and standards that you can develop further through training."

Ms. Mueller spoke about the importance of balanced partnerships, partnerships that suit the needs and context of both parties. She mentioned that fostering partnerships does not necessarily mean saying "yes" at every opportunity, but that often the real strength of a durable partnership can be knowing when it is appropriate to say "no" while, at the same time working together to find the best solutions to address humanitarian needs.

Written by: Shinyia Kurniawan | Photo: AHA Centre, United Nations



The UNOCHA delegation from New York, Bangkok, and Jakarta, visit the home of One ASEAN One Response.

It is in the context of growing trust and partnership that the AHA Centre continues to work closely with UNOCHA to facilitate induction courses for the ASEAN Emergency Response and Assessment Team (ERAT) – as part of the ASEAN-ERAT Transformation Plan – which links closely to the curriculum of the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination Team (UNDAC). As the international and regional humanitarian systems continue to develop, the need for coherence and interoperability between the coordination mechanisms managed at these various levels will be essential if we are to fulfil our collective mandate of meeting people's needs by supporting the lead role played by governments. The priority must be that our respective processes and mechanisms complement, but do not duplicate each other, while assuring the ongoing safeguarding of the universally agreed humanitarian principles.

With regard to collective emergency response and the coordination roles of entities such as the AHA Centre and UNOCHA, ASG Mueller believes that preventative measures are more effective than a purely reactive approach. Thus, investing in early warning systems and preparedness should be considered as a top priority for the ASEAN region. Such investment will enable early action and improved coordinated responses at the regional level and support collective and synergised engagement in broader humanitarian challenges, including climate change, migration, drought, urbanisation, and human-induced disasters that cause displacement and human suffering.



Discussing the roles of women leaders in humanitarian world with AHA Centre's Executive Director.

Ms. Mueller is also a member of the International Gender Champions network – a group comprised of male and female leaders who aim to deconstruct gender barriers and establish gender equality through their leadership capacity. “It is important that we have the support of the men who are in positions of power,” she stated. “The Secretary-General of the UN has approved a gender parity strategy, which he is very committed to. Through women's empowerment measures, we aim to achieve gender parity by 2028, as there is strong evidence that women's engagement in peace-building and peacekeeping operations can positively impact the achievement of solutions.”

“In my own experience, in order to break the glass ceiling, you have to be professional, true to your values, also make your own contributions known” H.E. Mueller continued. “Your contribution to solving an issue deserves recognition, but you have to also be humble enough to know that it is not about yourself. You may be frustrated, but stay optimistic, realistic, and never give up,” Ms. Mueller stated, while sharing her tips as a leading woman in the humanitarian network.

ONE ASEAN ONE RESPONSE



THE AHA CENTRE OFFICE

Graha BNPB, 13th Floor
Jl. Pramuka Kav. 38
Jakarta - 13120
INDONESIA



www.ahacentre.org



comm@ahacentre.org



AHA Centre



@ahacentre



@ahacentre

ABOUT ASEAN

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was established on 8 August 1967. The Member States of the Association are Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam. The ASEAN Secretariat is based in Jakarta, Indonesia. As set out in the ASEAN Declaration, the aims and purposes of ASEAN among others are to accelerate the economic growth, social progress, cultural development, to promote regional peace and stability as well as to improve active collaboration and cooperation.

ABOUT THE AHA CENTRE

The AHA Centre is an inter-governmental organisation established on 17 November 2011, through the signing of the Agreement on the Establishment of the AHA Centre by ASEAN Foreign Ministers, witnessed by the ASEAN Heads of State / Government from 10 ASEAN Member States: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam. The Centre was set-up to facilitate the cooperation and coordination among ASEAN Member States and with the United Nations and international organisations for disaster management and emergency response in the ASEAN region.

ABOUT AADMER

The ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) is a legally-binding regional policy framework for cooperation, coordination, technical assistance and resource mobilisation in all aspects of disaster management in the 10 ASEAN Member States. The objective of AADMER is to provide an effective mechanism to achieve substantial reduction of disaster losses in lives and in social, economic and environmental assets, and to jointly respond to emergencies through concerted national efforts.

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