This book highlights the support that contributes to the development and successes of the AHA Centre since its establishment, across its 5 years’ operations and in the future to come.
The AHA Centre Knowledge Series

Book #2

AHA CENTRE PARTNERSHIP
Building Trust and Confidence for Greater Purpose

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This year Indonesia has been honoured to chair the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Management (AMMDM), the AADMER Conference of the Parties (COP), the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) and the Governing Board of the AHA Centre. Sitting in these roles during 2016 has allowed Indonesia to witness the hard work and achievements reached by the AHA Centre throughout the last five years, and we are honoured to be part of the ongoing efforts undertaken in coordinating disaster management across the ASEAN region.

Indonesia has stood beside the AHA Centre since its establishment, and throughout the last five years has acted as the Host Country to facilitate the ongoing establishment and expansion of all AHA Centre's work. We are proud to have supported the AHA Centre through such processes, and have found great value in overseeing the movement. The Centre's role as the coordinating body for disaster management within the ASEAN region has become increasingly relevant and clear as we constantly face the increasing threat of disaster that affects our communities, our infrastructure and our social fabric as a whole.

We recognise the key roles played by National Disaster Management Offices of all ASEAN Member States, and highly value their engagement, support and input across all that we have undertaken throughout the last five years. We also extend our appreciation and thanks to all of our ASEAN Dialogue Partners and other partners who have supported and added value to the progress of our work, and hope that such support continues as we progress in the coming years.

FOREWORD
From the Chair of ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Management and AADMER Conference of the Parties, 2016

H.E. WILLEM RAMPANGILEI
Chief of BNPB
National Disaster Management Authority of Indonesia
2016 has also seen the important step of the ASEAN Declaration on One ASEAN One Response signed in September by all ASEAN Leaders. This vision, and its universal support, creates the strongest of platforms for the advancement of emergency management within ASEAN into the future. Indonesia is proud to have been a supporting member of the advancement of this vision, and looks forward to working with all parties towards the vision’s realisation.

We offer congratulations to the AHA Centre in all its work undertaken as captured by the AHA Centre Knowledge Series books. We also wish continued success for the future to come as we continue towards a coordinated and prepared ASEAN region in the face of disaster.
The first five years of the AHA Centre have been full of achievements, challenges, surprises and overall hard work by our dedicated team, stakeholders and supporters. Through the books of the AHA Centre Knowledge Series, we take a moment and a step back to witness the impact that the AHA Centre has had since its formation in 2011, to appreciate the achievements, to recognise the challenges and lessons, and to move forward as a united ASEAN region in the midst of the turbulence and instability that disaster can create.

Across the last five years, the AHA Centre and the overall solidarity of the ASEAN region has been tested time and again by disaster, and has grown stronger and more unified than before. Whether responding to large-scale destruction, developing world-class programmes, or implementing and promoting regional mechanisms to solidify the ASEAN emergency management sector, the AHA Centre has relentlessly strived to achieve its overall goals. However, we appreciate these achievements always with vision towards the future, understanding and preparing for the challenges and obstacles that lie ahead.

The recent ASEAN Declaration on One ASEAN One Response by the leaders of our region’s nations forms the next key building block for continuing the expansion and unification of our work within the ASEAN region. With this substantial declaration, the AHA Centre received not only full support for the
work we have undertaken over the previous five years, but importantly regional confidence and trust for the AHA Centre to continue in the role of coordinating ASEAN’s futures in the face of disaster. This confidence placed in our work provides even more passion and drive to reach new heights, and ensures the AHA Centre is fully resourced and prepared for what lies in wait.

It must be recognised that the outcomes realised since the AHA Centre’s establishment in 2011 could not have been achieved without the support of many, primarily from the ASEAN Member States and their National Disaster Management Offices. Their ongoing willingness to engage, support, and work with the AHA Centre has been the key factor in the development of our working areas. The support from the ASEAN Secretariat has also been highly valued. Our Dialogue Partners and partners have provided valuable ongoing support across the scope of our work. Finally, we recognise the leadership and support provided by the ASEAN Member States through the AMMDM, AADMER COP, ACDM and Governing Board over the last five years and also show great appreciation to Indonesia as the host country for the AHA Centre’s operations since formation.

With this book, we remember all those who have been affected by disaster, we learn the lessons to strengthen and improve our readiness in the future, and we duly appreciate the achievements and efforts of the AHA Centre and all its supporters. While predicting the future of disaster impact on the region is a near-impossible action, our region’s ability to prepare and respond as one single movement is a vision that gives us great confidence and hope for the future of a united and engaged ASEAN in the face of disaster.
Natural disaster presents itself in a range of shapes and sizes, with little warning as to when and where it will strike. As the world advances its preparation and prediction mechanisms to better mitigate losses due to natural disaster, the full magnitude of disaster impact remains relatively unknown, dependant on elements such as population size, density and location.

Southeast Asia forms a dynamic region, home to more than 600 million people, with its population and geography making it one of the largest regions in the world. It covers an area of approximately four million square kilometres, with its geographical position leaving it prone to a range of typhoons, earthquakes, floods and other natural disasters on a yearly basis. Southeast Asia has been home to some of the most violent natural disasters in recent history, with their intensity and impact resulting in great loss of lives and extensive damage to infrastructure and livelihoods. The Indian Ocean Tsunami in 2004 stands as the most significant recent example of a large-scale disaster within Southeast Asia, causing the deaths of more than 230,000 people, and impacting 14 countries in and outside the Southeast Asian region.
THE ASSOCIATION of Southeast Asian Nations, or 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 aims and purposes of ASEAN are:

- To accelerate the economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region through joint endeavours in the spirit of equality and partnership in order to strengthen the foundation for a prosperous and peaceful community of Southeast Asian Nations;
- To promote regional peace and stability through abiding respect for justice and the rule of law in the relationship among countries of the region and adherence to the principles of the United Nations Charter;
- To promote active collaboration and mutual assistance on matters of common interest in the economic, social, cultural, technical, scientific and administrative fields;
- To provide assistance to each other in the form of training and research facilities in the educational, professional, technical and administrative spheres;
- To collaborate more effectively for the greater utilisation of their agriculture and industries, the expansion of their trade, including the study of the problems of international commodity trade, the improvement of their transportation and communications facilities and the raising of the living standards of their peoples;
- To promote Southeast Asian studies; and
- To maintain close and beneficial cooperation with existing international and regional organisations with similar aims and purposes, and explore all avenues for even closer cooperation among themselves.

The ASEAN Secretariat was set up in February 1976 by the Foreign Ministers of ASEAN. The ASEAN Secretariat’s basic function is to provide for greater efficiency in the coordination of ASEAN organs and for more effective implementation of ASEAN projects and activities. The ASEAN Secretariat is based in Jakarta, Indonesia.
THE ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) is a legally binding framework for regional cooperation and coordination in all aspects of disaster management. AADMER was signed by the 10 ASEAN Foreign Affairs Ministers on 26 July 2005 and entered into force on 24 December 2009.

The Agreement guides the development of operational procedures to respond collectively and promptly to disasters. For example, it includes provisions to facilitate the movement of relief items and to expedite customs. It also defines the utilisation of military and civilian personnel in disaster relief operations. The Agreement mandates the creation of a centre to coordinate regional disaster response (the AHA Centre).
THE ASEAN Committee for Disaster Management (ACDM) serves as the main subsidiary body that oversees the operational implementation of AADMER under the Conference of Parties. Its main roles include:

- To provide leadership and guidance towards fulfilling the goals and objectives of AADMER, according to the vision of disaster-resilient nations and safer communities within ASEAN by 2015;
- To initiate, direct and oversee the development, monitoring and implementation of the AADMER Work Programme and other initiatives implemented by the respective working groups;
- To strengthen coordination with relevant ASEAN bodies;
- To collaborate with ASEAN Dialogue Partners, multilateral agencies, NGOs and the private sector.

The ACDM is headed by a Chair, supported by a Vice Chair, and consists of the heads of national agencies responsible for disaster management of ASEAN Member States. The ACDM meets at least once a year.

The ACDM also serves as the Governing Board for the AHA Centre, which assumes the overall responsibility and is accountable for the operations of the AHA Centre. The AHA Centre reports to and serves as the Secretariat of the Governing Board.
Following the entry into effect of AADMER, between 2009 and 2011, ASEAN Leaders vigorously promoted the establishment of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (the AHA Centre).

The AHA Centre was formally established during the 19th ASEAN Summit in Bali on 17 November 2011, through the signing of the ‘ASEAN Agreement on the Establishment of the AHA Centre’ by ASEAN Foreign Ministers and witnessed by the respective Heads of State/Government.

The AHA Centre was established to facilitate cooperation and coordination both internally among ASEAN Member States and externally with the United Nations and international organisations for disaster management and emergency response.

The AHA Centre’s primary functions are to facilitate regional cooperation for disaster management, to facilitate joint emergency preparedness and response, and to operationalise regional coordination mechanisms for emergency preparedness and response.

When a major disaster strikes the region, the AHA Centre plays a central role in facilitating the flow of information. It follows precise communication and coordination protocols as defined by the Standard Operating Procedure for Regional Standby Arrangements and Coordination of Joint Disaster Relief and Emergency Response Operations (SASOP).

During emergency response, the AHA Centre can also help mobilise ASEAN’s standby assets and personnel. The AHA Centre has the capacity to send relief items and deploy the ASEAN Emergency Response and Assessment Team (ASEAN-ERAT). The AHA Centre also organises simulation exercises on a regular basis to test regional emergency response mechanisms.
PARTNERING WITH THE AHA CENTRE
The AHA Centre is a unique mechanism, and therefore, the environment in which it develops and maintains its partnerships is also unique. Starting at the moment it was first mentioned within the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER), through its development stage, and on to its current form within the ASEAN region, the AHA Centre has been engaged with high anticipation and interest throughout the disaster management sector. It has truly pioneered the sector’s advance into new realms within ASEAN, with its unique context providing a combination of opportunity, apprehension and innovation for its partners and the wider disaster management sector as a whole. To a large degree, it is the AHA Centre’s distinctiveness that defines it, and it is this uniqueness, and the opportunities within it, that form a key element for attracting the interest of stakeholders to partner with the AHA Centre on its journey.

The attractiveness of, and opportunity for the AHA Centre is derived from its unique form, being that there are no others in its position within the ASEAN region. The political and operational context of ASEAN is notoriously diverse and difficult for stakeholders to navigate, therefore, the reach and influence possessed by the AHA Centre is invaluable to partners. The fact that it is ‘by ASEAN, for ASEAN’, is the AHA Centre’s primary beneficial characteristic.

While numerous regional disaster management mechanisms can be found across the globe, the AHA Centre stands as a unique opportunity for the engagement of an expansive and diverse ASEAN region in coordinated emergency management activities. The unique environment within which the AHA Centre operates forms a key strategic context for a wide array of actual and potential partners, as the AHA Centre forms a solitary coordinating mechanism that covers the entire disaster-prone region. The links and opportunities held by the AHA Centre are unique from any other emergency management stakeholder, and such links are further strengthened through One ASEAN, One Response, that affirms the AHA Centre as the primary ASEAN regional coordinating agency on disaster management and emergency response. Alongside this, the ASEAN Vision 2025 on Disaster Management was designed and developed by all ASEAN Member States, which means, in reality, that it is truly ‘ASEAN-owned’.

The AHA Centre holds, through its mandates, its connections and its evidenced work, is far greater and comprehensive than any external emergency management stakeholder could wish for. It forms the defining structure that links the ten Member States’ National Disaster Management Organisations (NDMOs), bolstering their local mechanisms and supporting them towards an efficient and participatory regional movement. For the AHA Centre partners, the value that this reach can have is immeasurable, as the AHA Centre can leverage its mechanisms and ASEAN support to extend from the halls of the ASEAN Secretariat and AHA Centre Office, all the way through to Member State local governance and grass-root community movements. Before the establishment of the AHA Centre, emergency management sector stakeholders could only dream of having such access. They would have to form understanding and agreements one-by-one, working with each Member State under a different set of guidelines, customs and context. With the advent of the AHA Centre, stakeholders can now partner with an established body that represents an entire region in a united effort to prepare and respond to natural disaster.

The reality that the AHA Centre is completely ASEAN-owned and agreed-upon cannot be overlooked, with the benefits for partners, as well as the ASEAN community itself, multiplied ten-fold in all aspects of its work. The fact that the AHA Centre is ‘by ASEAN, for ASEAN’ allows it not only access and authority, but ensures that key ASEAN elements and characteristics are not only understood within the mechanism, but actually form and drive the working processes of the AHA Centre. The result is that the AHA Centre has become the lead mechanism for partners, engaging in diplomacy across ASEAN governments, driving and promoting the shared mission and values held across the emergency management sector, and doing so through truly ASEAN methods and structures in a fully engaged and participatory manner.
“Before the AHA Centre, we would have to engage with each ASEAN nation separately, and develop processes and protocols that would vary from state to state. This became increasingly difficult when disasters would strike across borders. The advent of the AHA Centre has created an invaluable partnership mechanism that, in essence, is all ten ASEAN Member States working within the one body to coordinate disaster management.”

- The AHA Centre Partner

The strong official mandates created by ASEAN, that guide the AHA Centre’s work, form important and evidential foundations on which to develop partnerships. Such mandates show partners that ASEAN, and therefore the AHA Centre, are committed to achieving their identified goals and objectives, and provide formal authority for the mandated parties within such a framework. Mandates also enforce accountability, to both shareholders and clients, who in the AHA Centre’s context are uniquely formed by the same entity; namely ASEAN Member States. Such a wide mandate and accountability spectrum is inherently powerful when engaging partners.

Mandate is a greatly advantageous tool, regardless of the field of work, and the mandate provided to the AHA Centre by ten ASEAN Member States is unrivalled throughout the emergency management sector. AHA Centre partners, and other sector stakeholders, have built their work on years of negotiations, relationships and trust-building efforts to support emergency management efforts within the borders of sovereign Nation States. For AHA Centre partners, the mandate given to the AHA Centre by all ASEAN Member States forms the key defining element that ensures added confidence and opportunity for real and measurable outcomes when working with the AHA Centre throughout a range of issues. To confidently state that a single body has been given the authority to engage across an entire region is a cornerstone on which strong partnerships are developed, and while there still remains the need to negotiate and work strategically within this mandate, the formation of the AHA Centre ensures a single point of entry, a single body of authority, and a single mode of engagement throughout emergency management that is mandated across the ASEAN region.

Originally defined in the AADMER, the AHA Centre’s mandate has only grown in strength and clarity throughout its formation years. After AADMER came into force, the next mandate-strengthening action took place at the ratification of the ‘Agreement on the Establishment of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre
for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management’, signed by all ASEAN Foreign Ministers, and witnessed by all ASEAN Head of State/Government in November 2011. Since that time, the development and unified agreement on such regional mechanisms as Standard Operating Procedure for Regional Standby Arrangements and Coordination of Joint Disaster Relief and Emergency Response Operations (SASOP) and Disaster Emergency Logistic System for ASEAN (DELSA), alongside the endorsement of mechanisms such as the ASEAN Vision 2025 on Disaster Management, have further served to strengthen the AHA Centre’s mandate. Finally, in September 2016, the greatest statement of all was announced through the commitment of support for the AHA Centre within the declaration of ‘One ASEAN, One Response’. The defining element of this declaration was that it was read, agreed-upon and signed by the heads of all ten Member States, ensuring support for the movement from the absolute top echelon of each Member State’s governance. This strategic and innovative vision forms the backbone of the emergency management movement within ASEAN, with practical support through the AADMER Work Programme, and therefore receiving the support of the highest member of each nation’s government forms the greatest mandate that the AHA Centre could hope to achieve within the region. For AHA Centre partners, this agreement forms the strongest evidence and reasoning for continued engagement in supporting the development of a regional emergency management mechanism.

"As a result of the (Australia and the AHA Centre’s) partnership, ASEAN countries are now better prepared than ever before to minimise the impact of disaster events across the region and to implement the Leaders’ Declaration on One ASEAN One Response. We look forward to the AHA Centre growing even stronger as it implements One ASEAN One Response.”

- Government of Australia

With a mandate comes accountability, and the AHA Centre’s position of being ‘by ASEAN, for ASEAN’, ensures partners they are working within a unique accountability structure that essentially sees the AHA Centre as ‘dually accountable’. In business terms, the AHA Centre’s ‘shareholders’ and its ‘clients’ are in essence the same thing: ASEAN Member States, or by extension, ASEAN Member States’ NDMOs. The Member States govern and drive the actions of the AHA Centre, which result in outcomes to benefit the Member States themselves. This ensures that the intentions of the ‘shareholders’ and the ‘clients’ are identical, removing occurrences of misaligned visions and actions, as the same elements that satisfy one group are sure to satisfy the other. It also ensures comprehensive accountability to both ‘shareholders’ and ‘clients’, removing any element of imbalance. Such accountability can be leveraged to ensure partners that the AHA Centre is truly representative of the ASEAN context. This creates an environment where real actions and outcomes must be achieved, which, in turn, form an ideal environment for meaningful partnerships.

"Our mandates and our responsibility to ASEAN Member States means there is no room for complacency. The strength that the support of all Member States mandate to us is empowering, but also ensures that we work to our utmost ability to achieve results”

- The AHA Centre
The AHA Centre Knowledge Series

#2 AHA Centre Partnership

PARTNERSHIP MECHANISM
The AHA Centre partnership mechanism, much like the AHA Centre itself, is broad, and can be specifically designed to suit each particular situation. Ultimately, the AHA Centre engages in two particular types of partnerships, namely: direct partnerships, in which the AHA Centre partners directly with another organisation, with all resources provided under the partnership directed to the specific outcomes and objectives, and; indirect partnerships, in which the AHA Centre works with its partner as one of numerous components under the framework of a broader, usually ASEAN-focused agreement. The latter variety is most often found within ASEAN Dialogue Partner arrangements, and based on broader agreements between the partner nation’s government and ASEAN.

While specific terms and arrangements for each partnership will depend on the agreements of the parties themselves, the following cycle gives an insight into the general working processes of the AHA Centre partnership design.

**AHA CENTRE PARTNERSHIP CYCLE**

**INITIATION:**

The AHA Centre identifies its needs and requirements, based upon work programmes and plans, alongside its overall strategy. The AHA Centre then identifies partner opportunities, matching specific needs with strengths and interest of potential partners. On the other hand, interested parties may also approach the AHA Centre to form a partnership. In this instance, the AHA Centre matches the potential partner’s ideas and strengths with the AHA Centre’s needs and requirements, before continuing to the next stage.

**FORMALISATION:**

Formalisation of partnerships with the AHA Centre can take on a variety of forms, most often dependent on the type of partnership and the requests and requirements of the partner. Such formalisation processes may include agreements such as a Memorandum of Intent, an exchange of formal letters, or a range of direct project documents and contracts that ensure the partnership is official. The process often refers back to whether the arrangement is directly with the AHA Centre, or as part of a wider inter-governmental agreement.

**APPROVAL:**

For partnership approval, there are two distinct methods within the AHA Centre’s working scope. The first process is most often associated with partnerships that form part of a wider inter-governmental agreement. Within this process, the partnership will be approved by the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM), before being approved by the Committee of Permanent Representatives (or...
For funding mechanisms, partners have a range of options that can be suited to the needs of both the AHA Centre and the partner, as well as the specific programmatic requirements of the partnership. The funding mechanism will be determined during the project initiation and formalisation stages.

The AHA Centre implements numerous mechanisms to ensure monitoring and oversight of the progress of work resulting from the partnership, and works with partners to ensure their monitoring needs are also met. Such mechanisms include steering committees, reporting to the Governing Board of the AHA Centre, public reporting and transparency (for example Annual Reports, and specific programme monitoring, evaluation and reporting methods as outlined within the programme and partnership Terms of Reference. In addition, the AHA Centre shares progress of partnerships in regular open sessions of ACDM and its working group to promote synergies among assistance provided by partners to the AHA Centre.

The AHA Centre aims towards long-term, sustainable and mutually valuable partnerships. As such, it prefers to envisage the end of a partnership engagement as just a renewal of the partnership cycle, in which both parties can review, revise and continue previous work or begin on a new venture together. There are numerous processes that are used, depending on the nature of the plans for continuity within the partnership, however a key aim of the AHA Centre is to ensure evolution and regeneration of successful partnership engagements.
The AHA Centre has had the privilege to partner with a wide range of governments, institutions and organisations throughout its founding years. These partnerships have taken on a variety of forms and agreements, and all have provided immeasurable value into the development and sustainability of the AHA Centre as it stands today.

The AHA Centre’s vision, mission, operating environment and scope of work all provide sound reasoning for the importance of working in partnerships. Simply put, with the aim to coordinate disaster management across a region of ten nations, all with multiple governance systems and stakeholders, partnerships form a cornerstone of all the AHA Centre’s endeavours. Disaster management in general, within a single nation, or even district, requires multi-stakeholder coordination, with the impact of disaster felt across a wide range of areas and elements within a society. Across the ASEAN region these elements are multipliable by ten, with the addition of an active and engaged international sector widening the scope once more. Overall, the coordinating role of the AHA Centre would be near impossible to implement, let alone provide any value or impact, without the key element of partnerships within the AHA Centre’s work.

Through its founding years, partners have played valuable roles in the development of the AHA Centre and its programmes throughout a variety of integral inputs. There have been partnerships providing direct financial support, whether for the AHA Centre’s operations or programmatic functions. Partnerships have also focused towards key technical inputs, bringing skilled professionals from the vast emergency management sector to engage across the AHA Centre’s working areas. An array of material support through partnerships has seen the development and engagement of such critical functions as the DELSA stockpile at times of emergency. And finally, partnerships based on knowledge sharing and capacity building have worked to strengthen the capacity and sustainability of the AHA Centre itself, as well as the wider ASEAN disaster management mechanisms.
The ASEAN Dialogue Partners have formed one of the key supporting partnerships since the development of the AHA Centre in 2011. ASEAN Dialogue Partners from across the world have worked with the AHA Centre through funding support, programme development and implementation, training and educational engagement, and knowledge sharing activities, with such partnerships allowing the AHA Centre to strengthen and flourish into the organisation it is today. As the AHA Centre has developed, it has provided stronger and more relevant input into disaster management functions within its Dialogue Partner countries, allowing all parties a greater insight and understanding of the unique and innovative process that is ASEAN regional disaster management coordination.

**A U S T R A L I A**

Australia has been the partner that provided the base on which the AHA Centre has developed. Australia has provided key critical funding to support the AHA Centre’s operational costs during its development years, an area in which most partnerships are not willing to engage. The timing of Australia’s initial support was precise; filling the gap between the AHA Centre’s establishment and later funding clearances. This support has allowed the AHA Centre to engage with other partners throughout the full range of its working scope.
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Through the Cooperation Arrangement between the Commonwealth of Australia represented by Australia Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and ASEAN on the AADMER Work Programme 2010-2015, the Government of Australia has been a great supporter in supporting the operationalisation of AHA Centre since 2010, even prior to its official establishment in November 2011. The Government of Australia committed AUD 4.5 million to support the implementation of the AADMER Work Programme 2010-2015, where it allocated around AUD 3.1 million of the total funds for the AHA Centre in support of its operationalisation.

Such funding support not only allowed for operation expense coverage, but also supported the emergency deployment of AHA Centre staff, participation of AHA Centre staff in numerous regional capacity building exercises, facilitated the meetings of such bodies as the ACDM, AADMER Conference of the Parties and Governing Board, and provided for numerous other general capacity building engagements within the AHA Centre’s programming.

OUTCOMES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

From 2010 to 2016, the Australian Government has supported the AHA Centre’s development with financial input of around AUD 3.1 million. A large portion of this funding support was designated to cover the operational costs of the AHA Centre until the end of 2016.

Australia has supported the implementation of various workshops and meetings including more recently the ASEAN Joint Disaster Response Plan (AJDRP) workshop and several ‘One ASEAN, One Response’ roadshows during 2016.

Australia has supported AHA Centre staff direct engagement in a variety of workshops and capacity building activities throughout the AHA Centre’s development years.

“Australia has supported the AHA Centre from its very beginning…. I witnessed first-hand the operations of the AHA Centre during the October Philippines earthquake (2013), and I was impressed by what I saw. I can only reiterate, Australia stands ready, in solidarity with ASEAN, to meet this (Typhoon Haiyan) and subsequent challenges.”

- H.E. Simon Merrifield, Australian Ambassador to ASEAN (2013-2016)
Signed in October 2014, the China-ASEAN Cooperation on Disaster Management agreement formed a 3-year, around USD 8 million partnership. A portion of this will be used to support the work of the AHA Centre and the implementation of the AADMER Work Programme. The partnership aims to facilitate development of human resources, capacity building mechanisms, and general operational activities for ASEAN in the area of disaster management.

The European Union (EU) has provided input and support that has given an example to the AHA Centre as to what a regional disaster management mechanism should look like, and how they should go about their work. The EU stands as the most advanced regional disaster management mechanism in the world, and partnering with them has allowed the AHA Centre to receive numerous added values from the partnership.

The ASEAN-EU Emergency Management Programme (AEEMP), kicked-off in 2014, was the arrangement that aimed to strengthen the interconnectivity between various ASEAN emergency management actors namely the AHA Centre, ASEAN Secretariat and ASEAN Member States, as well as their interconnection with similar emergency response bodies in the EU, including the EU Situation Room and Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC). The programme was kicked-off in 2014 with allocated budget of around USD 3 million.

The programme particularly supported the AHA Centre to strengthen its corporate affairs systems, and ensure its operating procedures, policies and financial administrations are in line with the requirement of the European Commission Pillar Assessment. Additionally, the programme supported the elaboration of technical specifications for a possible integration of computer-aided web-based software solution, known as the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP). The partnership has also facilitated study visits and workshops between ASEAN and EU emergency management stakeholders, allowing for shared learning and professional development within all parties.

The EU has supported the AHA Centre through a variety or organisational strengthening efforts including training and visits from technical professionals, and the development and implementation of a range of corporate affairs and management mechanisms and tools.

The EU has facilitated a variety of study visits and knowledge sharing exercises both within the EU and the ASEAN regions.
The Integrated Programme in Enhancing the Capacity of AHA Centre and ASEAN Emergency Response Mechanisms (EU-SAHA) forms the latest working partnership outcome between the AHA Centre and the EU. As a mode to achieve the overall goal of AADMER, the partnership will work towards two key objectives, namely:

1. Supporting the capacity and sustainability of the AHA Centre to achieve operational excellence in disaster monitoring and emergency response, in line with the AHA Centre Work Plan 2020; and

2. Supporting the enhancement of mechanisms for ASEAN Leadership to Respond-As-One through excellence and innovation in disaster management.

Under the first objective, the project will aim to strengthen key AHA Centre operational mechanisms, in particular institutional capacity, corporate policies and management, alongside enhancing the AHA Centre’s operational capacity in monitoring and responding to disaster in the ASEAN region. Within the second objective, the partnership will focus towards strengthening current emergency management mechanisms, such as ASEAN Regional Disaster Emergency Response Simulation Exercise (ARDEX), ASEAN Emergency Response and Assessment Team (ERAT) and civil-military coordination. A range of activities will be implemented to achieve the designated objectives and results, including knowledge-sharing, direct training, individual capacity building and development of internal and external supporting mechanisms and processes for AHA Centre work.
Japan stands as the largest partner in terms of funds designated to the AHA Centre throughout its initial years. It has provided the highest amounts of funding support, and done so for the most diverse range of programmes and working mechanisms. Japan’s support has developed the interconnectedness of the AHA Centre, its Member States, and the wider global community, as well as facilitated the development of emergency response mechanisms within the region.

The Japanese Government, as an ASEAN Dialogue Partner, has provided significant support to the AHA Centre and its programmes before the centre’s inception in 2011 through the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF). Valued at almost USD 25 million, this significant financial support has allowed for a range of key programme deliverables, including such developments as the DELSA stockpile, the multi-stage ICT creation and support, as well as numerous studies and knowledge enhancement projects within the AHA Centre. As a Dialogue Partner, Japan also forms a key support mechanism for the AHA Centre Executive Programme (ACE Programme) that aims to prepare the future leaders of ASEAN in disaster management. This partnership, alongside strengthening ASEAN and Japanese ties and mutual support through disaster experience, has allowed for important financial stability and long-term increases in human capital and infrastructure within the AHA Centre operational environment.
Establishment and operationalisation of DELSA stockpile: The DELSA stockpile, housed and managed by the UNWFP in Subang, Malaysia, is a stockpile of relief items for speedy distribution at times of disaster in the region.

Development and Implementation of ICT Programme: The 3-phase ICT programme saw the initial design and development, synergising, and continuous improvement of information communication systems within the AHA Centre and NDMOs across the region.

Implementation of the ACE Programme: Aimed at developing future ASEAN disaster management leaders, the ACE Programme has built the capacity of 45 graduates from 8 ASEAN nations in its three batches so far.

NEW ZEALAND

New Zealand forms the AHA Centre’s first partner, and engaged with the AHA Centre even before its official establishment in November 2011. The support provided by New Zealand through the partnership agreement has not only been of great value since the AHA Centre’s establishment, but also provided key support during the processes taken to reach the stage of initial establishment.

The New Zealand Government as a Dialogue Partner has facilitated a range of valuable outcomes in partnership with the AHA Centre, spanning across operational funding, capacity building and training, and particular focus towards risk identification and monitoring processes within ASEAN disaster management functions. The partnership has allowed the development and improvement of internal AHA Centre’s standard operating procedures, engaged the AHA Centre in training related to needs assessment and monitoring, and supported various office activities and equipment within the centre itself.

The partnership has also opened doors to knowledge sharing, with specific engagement of academics from various Universities in New Zealand through the ACE Programme, allowing for shared learning and capacity building, alongside other specific practical training and activities facilitated by the partnership with New Zealand. The New Zealand Government and the AHA Centre has also selected Humanitarian Advisory Group (HAG) as the consultant to help detailing actions and initiatives that will deliver technical and training support to the AHA Centre.

"For Japan, the AHA Centre is one of the most functioning bodies in ASEAN. We hope that the AHA Centre will be further strengthened in financial and human resources”

– Government of Japan
The AHA Centre Knowledge Series

#2 AHA Centre Partnership

As part of the ACE Programme, representatives from ASEAN NDMOs visit New Zealand every year to join the course on “Leadership in Crisis for Disaster Managers” from University of Canterbury.

The New Zealand Government has provided extensive financial support for the AHA Centre’s operations, particularly in improving the organisational structure and design, strategic planning capabilities as well as guidelines and SOPs of the AHA Centre.

New Zealand has facilitated the engagement of educational institutions such as the University of Canterbury to support and deliver activities within major AHA Centre programming, such as the ACE Programme.

Through the funding administrator, the Humanitarian Advisory Group (HAG), the AHA Centre has been engaged with numerous training programmes and professional technical advisors to support its work.

Specific programmes, expertise and equipment have been provided by New Zealand to maintain the existing state-of-the-art ICT in the AHA Centre office.
"New Zealand values the relationship we have developed with the AHA Centre since first providing technical advice during AHA’s establishment in 2011. Our commitment, then and now, reflects that New Zealand’s support is explicitly focused on the region’s own aims as expressed in the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER)."

– Government of New Zealand

Partnering with the USA has facilitated the development of decision-making process and capacity within the AHA Centre’s work. Support provided has allowed the AHA Centre access to near-real-time information, impacting decision-making about disaster response, as well as the ability to communicate closely with all stakeholders, fostering decision-making during disaster response. The partnership has also provided the AHA Centre with access to some of the most state-of-the-art, USA-designed technology and products, as well as the capacity and skills to use them.

In partnership with the United States Government, another ASEAN Dialogue Partner, has provided great benefit to the AHA Centre through a range of resource and capacity building projects. The US Government’s Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster and Civic Aid (OHDACA) office has worked closely with the AHA Centre on developing systems, such as the Disaster Monitoring and Response System (DMRS, supported by the Pacific Disaster Center), training for elements related to DMRS and ICT, and a range of joint activities for capacity building, including with the US Army Marine Corps, the US Forest Service (USFS), US-PROGRESS, the Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance, and the Pacific Disaster Center. The partnership has also facilitated important outcomes such as the Emergency Response Organisation (adapted from Incident Command System or ICS, introduced by USFS), ASEAN Joint Disaster Response Plan (AJDRP) and the development of the ASEAN ICS Roadmap.

The AHA Centre has also discussed with US-ASEAN Business Council on the potential engagement with the US private sector.
The USA has provided a range of direct capacity building programmes for ASEAN Member States and AHA Centre staff since 2013. Using a range of direct support and technical inputs, the USA has strengthened the operationalisation of the AHA Centre through engagement with institutions such as USFS, Pacific Disaster Center, and the Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance.

Engaged the AHA Centre, as well as its programmes such as ACE and ASEAN-ERAT, in a variety of practical and technical capacity building activities, including DMRS, ICS and Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) training.

“As part of our Strategic Partnership with ASEAN, and aligned to AADMER, we have collectively agreed to strengthen our respective capabilities in reducing disaster risks and being better prepared to manage and recover from disasters. We recognise that the AHA Centre is a key player in achieving this”

– ASEAN Dialogue Partner
A unique partnership arrangement was formed in March 2016, which saw the AHA Centre enter into a three-party partnership with the Global Initiative on Disaster Risk Management (GIDRM) and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). Initially focuses towards facilitating, supporting and improving the implementation of the ARDEX, a regional exercise designed and implemented by the AHA Centre on a biennial basis. This partnership engaged the AHA Centre with two European governmental bodies, namely the German Government (through GIDRM) and the Switzerland Government (through SDC) on a range of targeted measures for increasing the quality of disaster management practice within the ASEAN region.

**KEY PARTNERSHIP OBJECTIVES**

Initially focused towards the ARDEX activity, the partnership aims to engage in the areas of information, expertise, resources and ideas of mutual interest and benefit through:

- Mutually reviewing and possibly improving the SASOP and ARDEX handbooks;
Supporting the funding, organising and monitoring of Exercise Planning Team meetings, as well as providing training and support for planning and decision-making for the AHA Centre for future meetings;

Supporting the funding of ARDEX referee training;

Providing ICT expert to evaluate ICT systems at the AHA Centre that are utilised through ARDEX, as well as potential new systems that can be utilised by ARDEX;

Support for capacity building initiatives such as performance assessment, AHA Centre interconnectivity and interoperability, and feedback and guidance on conducting exercise evaluation.

UN, RED CROSS & RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT AND CIVIL SOCIETIES

Cyclone Nargis struck Myanmar in 2008, and while the AHA Centre had yet to officially be established, many of the key individuals who were already engaged in the disaster management field had begun to circulate and promote the plans for the AHA Centre’s development in the near future. For many of these individuals, the response to Cyclone Nargis was a key step in which they witnessed the value of the wider civil society movement in disaster response, and recognised the importance of engaging the major players even before the AHA Centre officially opened its doors. This formed a time within which some of the early steps for numerous significant partnerships were implemented, particularly on individual levels between strategic civil society institutions and the future leaders of the AHA Centre.

UNOCHA

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) and the AHA Centre, in essence, display many similarities in their design and work, with the AHA Centre being regionally-focused, while UNOCHA coordinate at a global level. Therefore, a strong partnership between the two organisations made perfect sense. The AHA Centre was striving to take on a coordinating role for ASEAN, while UNOCHA searched for more influence and impact within the region, as well as methods to decrease the strain on its overall resources and working processes. Since the official partnership began between the AHA Centre and UNOCHA, the two parties have worked closely across a range of formal and informal aspects to develop the AHA Centre’s work, and to further engage UNOCHA within the ASEAN emergency management context. UNOCHA has consistently supported training and capacity building within the AHA Centre and its programmes, including trainings that focus primarily towards such areas as International Humanitarian System, Humanitarian Communication, and the Civil-Military Coordination Framework. UN OCHA also provides training within the ASEAN-ERAT and the ACE Programme, related to the overall international humanitarian affairs, allowing participants to gain in-depth and knowledgeable insight into the processes and practices of disaster response management in an international context.

The ASEAN-UN Joint-Strategic Plan of Action on Disaster Management 2016 – 2020 will form the guiding document of the AHA Centre’s partnership with UNOCHA across the next few years. Within this plan, the United Nations subscribed to following the 8 priority programme areas within the AADMER Work Programme 2016 – 2020, and particularly mentions that strengthening institutional capacity for AADMER will “further continued partnership with the AHA Centre and support for its journey towards full functionality, comprehensive action and regional leadership on preparedness and response”. The plan also recognised the previous success of practical work approaches between the AHA Centre and UNOCHA for activities such as UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) training.
“The expectation and hope that we have, is that we get 5 or 10 years more of the same excellent cooperation and collaboration that we’ve had between the United Nations and ASEAN, between UNOCHA and the AHA Centre going forward”

– Oliver Lacey-Hall, Head of UNOCHA, Jakarta, Indonesia
As the cluster lead for emergency response logistics, the United Nations World Food Programme (UNWFP) represents the pinnacle of logistical mechanisms within and outside the sector, and therefore forms one of the AHA Centre’s most valuable partners. Within the DELSA project, the AHA Centre and the UNWFP partnered to develop the processes and mechanisms for DELSA, with the WFP-UN Humanitarian Response Depot (UNHRD) undertaking the warehouse management of AHA Centre emergency relief items located in Subang, Malaysia, and working with the AHA Centre to mobilise said relief items at times of disaster in the ASEAN region. Alongside this, the UNWFP has also engaged through training delivery within the AHA Centre’s ACE Programme, in particular building capacity of programme participants regarding humanitarian logistics and supply chains, and providing a hands-on opportunity for ACE Programme participants to learn the technicalities alongside experienced UNWFP staff. With an eye to the future, the UNWFP is also featured within the AADMER Work Programme 2016 – 2020, and will work with the AHA Centre on a range of projects and activities under the AADMER scope.
The AHA Centre has formed a positive and ongoing relationship with the AADMER Partnership Group (APG), a consortium of seven civil society organisations formed to assist the people-centred implementation of AADMER across ASEAN. The APG in particular, played an integral role in the AHA Centre’s development of a lessons learned document after Typhoon Haiyan, ensuring valuable insight and feedback that has allowed the AHA Centre to continue to improve its work in the field.

The AHA Centre has also developed strong relationships with such organisations as the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), alongside the National Societies, to increase engagement in training and knowledge-sharing exercises between these important emergency management stakeholders.

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Through the ACE Programme and ASEAN-ERAT course, the AHA Centre also works with various organisations such as University of Canterbury, International Organisation for Migration (IOM), Save the Children, Civic Force Japan, RedR, London School Academy Indonesia, Cohn and Wolfe PR, British Council, Syliah Kuala University, Joint Centre for Disaster Research, Sprint, Humanitarian Logistics – Asia Pacific Education Centre, Civic Force, Channel News Asia, and DHL. Each year also sees delegations from across the world visit the AHA Centre, sharing, learning and witnessing the variety and scope of AHA Centre operations.
“Beyond the skills and knowledge transferred, we have already seen concrete examples of how the human connections between the AHA Centre/ASEAN Member State governments and our organisation have facilitated some initiatives at country level.”

- Civil Society Partner

NEW HORIZON PARTNERS

The future for partnerships with the AHA Centre is a bright one, as a range of opportunities for valuable partner engagement grows alongside the AHA Centre itself. Strengthening ties and devising new strategy with current partners is important, however the AHA Centre is also turning to other areas in search of valuable partnership input. The following are a cross-section of recent partnership developments that will serve to support the AHA Centre’s work in the years to come.
In November 2015, the AHA Centre opened a new chapter in its partnerships story, signing an agreement with the Corporate Citizen Foundation (CCF) based in Singapore. The development of this partnership formed a unique step for the AHA Centre, as it stood as the AHA Centre’s first foray into partnerships with a private or corporate entity. The CCF is a private sector initiative that seeks to support sustainable community development initiatives through capacity building within sustainable development and disaster management, and would serve to open the door to a new range of resources, ideas and engagements for the AHA Centre within its partnership scope.

KEY PARTNERSHIP OBJECTIVES

- Developing a framework to facilitate greater participation, involvement and collaboration of corporate entities in disaster management;
- Organising and participating in knowledge sharing activities on disaster management or related themes;
- Training CCF personnel and partners on ASEAN Emergency Response and Assessment team (ASEAN-ERAT) by the AHA Centre;
Providing the AHA Centre access to CCF and its partner’s resources, such as aircraft, logistics, relief items, broadcasting systems and expertise;

Identifying and engaging possible corporate contributors by CCF to support AHA Centre operations and initiatives.

DIRECT RELIEF

With a long history of providing health and medical support for communities recovering from disaster and war, California-based Direct Relief entered into partnership with the AHA Centre in November 2016. The availability and access to medical supplies and equipment is a specific necessity for any disaster preparation and response activities, and this new partnership aims to allow for such access and understanding through Direct Relief’s work, as well as promote information sharing and capacity building between the two parties.
The AHA Centre Knowledge Series

#2 AHA Centre Partnership

Collaborative disaster preparedness working arrangements that support the AHA Centre with the identification of medical materials commonly required during disaster response, and supporting the efficient access to such materials when required;

The collaborative development of a framework to engage corporate entities, such as medical suppliers, for stockpiling, funding and understanding medical supplies, that will in turn support the overall emergency preparedness and response mechanisms of the AHA Centre;

Organising and engaging in information and knowledge-sharing activities between the partners, as well as externally, and Direct Relief providing the AHA Centre access to its own relevant resources and knowledge management that may support the AHA Centre's operations.

The Shaw Foundation, as one of the largest philanthropic organisations in the world, has been providing support to advance and improve community standard of living and social wellbeing since the 1950s. Based in Singapore, the Shaw Foundation has spread its work throughout multiple locations within the ASEAN region, and in November 2016 entered into a partnership with the AHA Centre based upon a number of resource sharing and capacity building elements.

KEY PARTNERSHIP OBJECTIVES

Under the Memorandum of Intent between the AHA Centre and Direct Relief, the partnership aims include:

- Access for the AHA Centre to in-kind (donations) of pharmaceuticals, medicines, medical equipment and supplies;
- The opportunity to stockpile and prepare such medical materials;
- Collaborative disaster preparedness working arrangements that support the AHA Centre with the identification of medical materials commonly required during disaster response, and supporting the efficient access to such materials when required;
- The collaborative development of a framework to engage corporate entities, such as medical suppliers, for stockpiling, funding and understanding medical supplies, that will in turn support the overall emergency preparedness and response mechanisms of the AHA Centre;
- Organising and engaging in information and knowledge-sharing activities between the partners, as well as externally, and Direct Relief providing the AHA Centre access to its own relevant resources and knowledge management that may support the AHA Centre's operations.

SHAW FOUNDATION

The Shaw Foundation, as one of the largest philanthropic organisations in the world, has been providing support to advance and improve community standard of living and social wellbeing since the 1950s. Based in Singapore, the Shaw Foundation has spread its work throughout multiple locations within the ASEAN region, and in November 2016 entered into a partnership with the AHA Centre based upon a number of resource sharing and capacity building elements.

KEY PARTNERSHIP OBJECTIVES

- Promoting and facilitating greater participation and collaboration in regional disaster management processes;
- Organising and supporting disaster management capacity building and knowledge sharing activities;
Identifying and engaging opportunities for support from the Shaw Foundation to support the AHA Centre’s operations, programmes and initiatives related to stockpiling, funding, expertise and others;

Specific support from the Shaw Foundation on mechanisms such as the annual ASEAN Strategic Policy Dialogue on Disaster Management and similar activities.
LESSONS
LEARNED
SELF-IDENTIFIED NEEDS

The capacity for the AHA Centre to recognise, understand and define its own needs has been the foundation on which it has improved its partnership context and outcomes. The ability to identify and understand its own needs has thus formed more balance within the AHA Centre’s partnership arrangements. With this knowledge and understanding, the AHA Centre can determine its own partnerships, and drive concept and design processes.

Balance forms a primary characteristic of successful partnerships, whether balance at the negotiating table, balance in designing programmes or projects, or balance throughout continuous workflow. Partnership balance was an ever-present obstacle during the early partnerships within the AHA Centre, and could often be attributed to weaker strategies and aims during these initial years. Such weaknesses were based on numerous aspects, including lack of resources, limited capacity and knowledge, and a vulnerable operating environment. While there was a strong central management unit, the strategies and plans to reach the AHA Centre’s goals and objectives were still being developed alongside the AHA Centre itself, with resulting early-stage partnerships that were often more donor-driven in nature. This, however, was part of the learning and development process for the AHA Centre, and as the organisation has strengthened, so too have its strategical elements and objectives, resulting in increasingly balanced and AHA Centre-driven partnership formations.

Strengthened strategic planning and development within the AHA Centre has been visible for all stakeholders in the partnership scope, as has the confidence of the AHA Centre in understanding its challenges and communicating its needs. Such strategy does not only cover the general programming aims of the AHA Centre, but delves into other areas such as business continuity and finance, government and stakeholder engagement, and of course strategic partnership planning itself. The increased ability for the AHA Centre to enter into partnerships through identifying their own aims and requirements provides not only value to the AHA Centre itself, but ensures donors and partners that the AHA Centre has not only visible aims and goals, but a clear roadmap on how it plans to achieve them. Having an in-depth understanding about their partners, as well as themselves, allows the AHA Centre to be more strategic in its engagement and value identification within the partnership scope, with such tools as the recent AHA Centre Work Plan 2020 providing a strong and evidential base for the AHA Centre to enter partnership discussions. The stability and assuredness that such mechanisms create will form the more strategic and effective environment that both the AHA Centre and its partners have worked towards.

LEADING IMPLEMENTATION

Strategy and needs identification is not the sole recipe for successful partnerships. As the AHA Centre has grown to learn over the years, being a leader and controlling implementation of its work is also highly important, and most often results in visible levels of success and impact for its Member States and the wider ASEAN community.

During its establishment years, the AHA Centre has experienced a range of contexts for programme implementation. This has included taking a role as lead implementer, as well as playing a small role within a larger implementation process. From this experience, it has become clear to the AHA Centre the importance of being the lead implementer of programmes that take place within the AHA Centre spectrum. This is primarily due to the AHA Centre’s position and role within the ASEAN region. The AHA Centre is the coordinating body for disaster management, and it understands ASEAN constituents, ASEAN processes, and the ASEAN context. Therefore, the AHA Centre holds the widest range of knowledge and understanding that is required to implement successful, meaningful and efficient programmes within its scope.
While it is imperative that the AHA Centre play the lead role in coordinating and implementing the programmes and mechanisms that fall within its working areas, it does not by all means mean that the value of its partners is in any way decreased. On the contrary, without the technical and resource inputs from its partners, any programme implementation within the AHA Centre would be almost impossible. It is the value of partnerships that provide technical and knowledgeable insight, facilitate the opportunity to develop programming, and ultimately share value with the AHA Centre through working closely together towards outcomes that benefit the ASEAN region. Balancing programmatic inputs, and ensuring they are efficient and create positive results within the ASEAN context is an imperative objective. With the AHA Centre leading programme implementation, well supported and promoted by strong partnerships and partners, an optimal environment is formed for highly successful and impactful outcomes for the ASEAN region, Member States, and the overall general community facing the threat of disaster.

FLEXIBILITY AND RESPONSIVENESS

Being flexible and responsive to change forms an integral ingredient for a successful partnership, especially within the evolving and unpredictable disaster management field. Being open and positive to change, and holding the will and understanding to give, take and compromise within partnerships has been a primary function that has supported the success of AHA Centre partnerships.

As the AHA Centre's working environment is so dynamic and influenced by change, so, therefore, must be its characteristics and attitudes when working in partnerships. While the AHA Centre itself has needs and requirements, alongside its communities and Member States, so do its partners and the stakeholders they serve. Far outweighing all these needs, requirements, strategies and programmes is a working environment that is shaped by instability that can change at the shift of a tectonic plate or at the advance of a storm surge. It is within this scope that the AHA Centre views a successful partnership. The AHA Centre has, over the years, experienced all the momentum changes, surges and shifts in stability that go hand-in-hand with partnership development. It has learnt about the importance of being open and willing to take on such changes as it arrives. Ultimately, it has learned that real impact within partnership arrangements not only relies on strong strategy, communication and implementation, but on the ability and willingness to make split decisions to change track or try something new when the context requires. Overall, being strict and rigid in the way that it works, the way that it partners, is not necessarily the recipe for success in such an evolving environment. Flexibility and responsiveness to change are also integral elements.

Partnerships are a give-and-take situation; they can never be a one-way street. There is a strong necessity for compromise and creativity. In reality, any partnership will not result in both parties being 100% satisfied, however should reflect the value and opportunity that the partnership holds. With clear strategies and a proven track-record, the AHA Centre has the ability and the opportunity to not only ensure that it can negotiate valuable terms for its own objectives, but that its partners also experience the full value that the AHA Centre has to offer. And should the context change, or obstacles arise, the AHA Centre has become skilled and responsive enough to engage in strategic and timely decision-making, ensuring the flexibility and authority to roll with the operating environment as it evolves around them.

DELIVERING RESULTS CREATING TRUST

The AHA Centre has, in its early years, developed a reputation for achieving results in-line with plans formulated through partnership, even within a context of limited resources and capacity. Delivering results forms a primary element for building trust within partnerships, and also creates evidence on which new partnerships can be developed. The ability of the AHA Centre to deliver
results, particularly within its establishment as a regional body, has allowed it a strong foundation on which to maintain and expand current partnerships, as well as develop new agreements during the years to come.

A key component in any relationship, trust is a ‘make-or-break’ element within working partnerships, whether trust between individuals involved or overall institutionalised trust. Trust builds confidence, and confidence between partners creates a strong base on which to build a solid and impactful working partnership. As mentioned previously, the original AHA Centre management team had built strong relationships with numerous partners during the years leading up to the AHA Centre’s establishment, with this groundwork facilitating the smooth development of numerous formal partnerships as the AHA Centre officially took shape. However, trust and partnerships developed on planning and ideas alone is one thing, and the AHA Centre then had to strive to consolidate, justify and institutionalise the trust developed if it was to truly gain the position and strength it desired. There is one sure-fire way to validate trust in any working partnership; namely, through evidencing real results and outcomes that show value within a partnership. This, therefore, became the AHA Centre’s key success, as it worked tirelessly to repay the trust and faith shown it the initial plans and ideas by creating real results that benefitted the AHA Centre itself, its partners, and the ASEAN community it serves.

While the AHA Centre boasts an impressive list of achievements during its formation years, a number of specific programmatic outcomes achieved through strong partnerships are particularly worthy of highlight. There is the ACE Programme, designed to develop a pool of ASEAN leaders in disaster management that has quickly become a key success within the AHA Centre’s formation years. While the programme continues to evolve, and will further change and strengthen in the years to come, it represents a mechanism of notable size and complexity that has engaged numerous partners in its implementation. While the partnership with JAIF formed the bedrock of the ACE Programme development, the final product was to be developed by a range of partnerships, large and small, that would see a valuable and innovative programmatic outcome become one of the key mechanisms in the AHA Centre’s coordinating function within ASEAN. To deliver the programme, the AHA Centre engaged in a range of partnerships with a variety of partners, most particularly aimed to developing and strengthening the capacity of ASEAN emergency management professionals. The resulting capacity development was not just limited to programme participants however, as AHA Centre staff would also learn vastly from engaging with partners, as would partners learn more about the ASEAN context and its people through partnering within the ACE Programme.

Partnerships with institutions through the ASEAN Dialogue Partners saw the development of vital information communication software, such as WebEOC (providing an information hub for NDMOs at times of disaster), or the Disaster Monitoring and Response System, developed with the support of the USA. Such partnerships have also opened doors to shared learning activities, with capacity development activities engaging ASEAN representatives with universities, disaster management operations and other professionals working in the disaster management sector across the globe. The development and implementation of the DELSA project, aimed to provide direct and speedy access to relief items within ASEAN communities affected by disaster, formed another key outcome reached through a range of partnerships. Primarily, DELSA functionality was based on the partnership between the AHA Centre and the United Nations World Food Programme, a partnership that opened the door to a range of benefits and value for all parties. Through DELSA’s development, two-way learning and information sharing was ever-present, as all parties progressed towards the united vision of a more prepared and responsive ASEAN region. However, ultimately, this partnership achieved an objective that stretched beyond the realms of internal partnerships and organisational value; namely, that it developed a mechanism that would have positive outcomes for ASEAN communities themselves. This achievement of a direct impact objective forms a prime example of partnership strengthening through trust, realising results, and achieving the visions partners that being a stronger and more resilient ASEAN region.
Value for both parties is integral to long-term viability of a strong partnership, with goals and objectives aligned and achieved in tandem. The AHA Centre has undoubtedly been the recipient of much value within its previous partnership agreements, however, have also offered value to partners throughout the formation years. Numerous stakeholders have partnered with the AHA Centre based on potential future value, therefore, as the AHA Centre continues to develop and strengthen, so must its value input into mutually-beneficial partnerships.

Mutual benefit is an integral element of successful and sustainable partnerships, and is an area that has developed continuously alongside the overall development of the AHA Centre itself. The AHA Centre’s partners have most often engaged to support the AHA Centre under the assumption that, as a result of the partner’s support, the partner will experience increased value from the partnership in the future. The AHA Centre is the first to admit that it has gained a great share of value from its initial partnerships, partnerships that supported it through its developmental stages using a variety of methods. However, there has been no shortage of value gained by partners during this stage, with partners gaining key insight, understanding and access to the region, while future benefits for partners can be identified across the range of AHA Centre’s current partnership efforts.

It is important to recognise that the AHA Centre and its partners all work under a similar, if not identical, mission and vision; namely, to reduce disaster losses and enhance regional cooperation to respond jointly to disasters (the key goal of AADMER). It is within this context that the achievement mutually-beneficial partnerships are formed. Aside from the previously-mentioned value added by partnering with the AHA Centre related to its unique status, mandated mission and diplomatic access to the region, benefits for AHA Centre partners have also been evident through both formal and informal modes. Partnerships have created access for AHA Centre partners to the region’s various emergency management mechanisms and resources, as well as providing a platform for gaining increased knowledge and understanding related to the ASEAN region’s unique and complex range of contexts, cultures and specific needs. Partners engaging in such activities as the ACE Programme have benefitted directly as the programme is a primary method of bringing people together; in this case, a variety of staff from the region’s NDMOs, that bring with them a range of experiences and insights into their particular ASEAN nation. In another example, the UNWFP, through its engagement in partnering to develop the DELSA stockpile, was provided great insight into the types of specific relief items that would be most beneficial to ASEAN communities at times of disaster. Such learning captured cultural elements that had not been considered previously, with positive results for communities, and strong learning outcomes for AHA Centre partners. These reverse-learning mechanisms allow the AHA partners to better and more efficiently achieve their aims and goals of supporting the international community in the face of disaster.

While there are notable examples of mutual benefit throughout a range of current AHA Centre partnerships, it is the future that holds the highest value for AHA Centre partners. By supporting and partnering with the AHA Centre through its early development stages, partners have a strategic foothold that can facilitate their work in the years to come, even to the point of having a positive global effect. Particularly for international stakeholders, the value of a highly resourced and skilled ASEAN regional emergency management mechanism cannot be underestimated. Such stakeholders work within a system that is already highly strained for resources and capacity, with further instability created by a world facing increasing occurrence of natural and human-made disaster. The development of a model such as the AHA Centre, and the effect it can have as its work permeates throughout the region, in essence acts as a partner’s ‘replacement’ for undertaking related work across ASEAN, allowing them to free-up resources and form more strategic and balanced future partnerships. Such a development also forms a strong example for other regions across the globe, and learning from this example facilitates communities and their governments to become more engaged, resourced and prepared on a regional level at times of disaster. These mutually-beneficial experiences are the building blocks of strong partnerships, that not only create value for both parties, but ensure the entire sector’s vision of a resilient and prepared global community is increasingly achievable and realistic.
“With a world currently facing increasing disaster situations, there is most definitely an increased impact on our resources and capacity to respond across the globe. By working alongside and supporting the AHA Centre through its developmental stages, there is a high likelihood that their presence will serve to alleviate the constraints on our own resources and impact in the future. This will allow us to engage more strategically within the ASEAN region, and release our resources to other areas and emergency situations.”

- The AHA Centre Partner
BUILDING TO
THE FUTURE
With more than five years of partnership engagement behind it, the AHA Centre will now shift its focus towards a future full of opportunity and possibility. This moment in time forms a pivotal cog in the ever-developing AHA Centre machine, a moment in which the AHA Centre forges forward with greater sense of meaning, support and strategy, built upon experience, lessons learned and strong, trustworthy partnerships evidenced by real results. The AHA Centre’s thirst for improvement and shared learning is unquenchable, with the outcomes of half a decade of partnerships providing real insight into areas for strengthening and improvement within the partnership scope. While highlighting the obstacles and successes is important, the AHA Centre will define areas for improvement and innovation as it engages increasing amounts of partners within its overall working mechanisms. There are a number of key partnership areas identified that, with strong agreement, support and input, will ensure continuous improvement towards objectives, and all but guarantee the sustainable bright future of this unique regional disaster management mechanism.

A CLEAR PATH

Taking advantage of strengthened strategic mechanisms, identifying and communicating plans and needs, and continuing to develop across all of its operations will become a key focus of the AHA Centre in the coming years. Strong strategy is the result of clear understanding and aims within an institution, and will result in increased balance within partnerships, as well as evidence understanding of, and work to meet the identified needs of the AHA Centre. Strong strategy will also reflect in the AHA Centre’s partnership engagements directly, with the opportunity to identify and engage partners in a more strategic way.

The AHA Centre’s key strategies that span across the full range of its operations and organisational mechanisms form an integral ingredient of developing meaningful partnerships in the years to come. While the AHA Centre has always had a variety of strategies for various elements, its formation years centred more towards needs-based partnerships, often donor-driven, with strategy and plans either flexible to situation, or still under development. However, as years passed, strategic planning depth and scope has flourished, with the AHA Centre now possessing comprehensive and all-encompassing plans and strategy for its future. Broadly based on the ASEAN Vision 2025 on Disaster Management, and further strengthened by the declaration on One ASEAN, One Response, the AHA Centre plans to focus towards inclusivity, leadership and innovation, provision of knowledge and expertise, and to shift outwards and become more involved in the global emergency management movement.

Such clarity and a defined roadmap allows the AHA Centre a strong and cemented base on which to enter the partnership negotiation arena. In basic terms, it provides the AHA Centre a firm and evidenced framework that defines its preferred results from partnership engagements. Concurrently, this also allows for more confidence, insight and understanding for current and potential partners, relating to the AHA Centre’s vision and implementation processes. Partners can further align themselves within the AHA Centre’s strategic framework, with an overall result of increased harmony in the power balance throughout the range of AHA Centre partnerships.

The ASEAN Leaders sign the ASEAN Declaration on One ASEAN One Response at the 28th and 29th ASEAN Summits in Vientiane, Lao PDR
There are numerous mechanisms and documents that will drive and add clarity and sustainability to the AHA Centre’s partnerships throughout the next decade. From the broadest perspective, the ASEAN Vision 2025 on Disaster Management forms the overall framework within which the AHA Centre operates. Designed and implemented by the ACDM panel and technical professionals, this vision guides all disaster management mechanisms within the ASEAN region. The subsequent AADMER Work Programme 2016-2020 forms the operational document, based on the Vision 2025, that will guide the region’s disaster management activities until the turn of the decade. Following closely behind the ASEAN Vision 2025 on Disaster Management is the ASEAN Declaration on One ASEAN, One Response, a commitment for the advancement of ASEAN unity in disaster management.

The declaration provides very solid ground for the steps that the AHA Centre will take to reach its ‘One ASEAN, One Response’ vision, and most importantly, was signed by the Heads of State/Government from all ten ASEAN nations in September 2016. Finally, within the AHA Centre itself, a 5-year work plan has been developed that states the operational activities that will support the AHA Centre to reach its objectives underneath the umbrella of visions and declarations above. The AHA Centre Work Plan 2020, developed as the framework to compliment the ASEAN disaster management vision, further increases the importance of strategic partnerships to achieve desired results. It sets out a physical roadmap for AHA Centre activities and outcomes, identifies required inputs, and creates a clear space for the AHA Centre and its partners to identify and achieve optimal value within any working functions they engage.

Finally, communicating strategies and plans is integral to the range of processes outlined above. Ensuring that partners are aware and clear with the messages the AHA Centre is delivering becomes imperative, especially within a multi-stakeholder environment and with partners spanning the globe. Within this context, developing strong monitoring and reporting mechanisms will also be prioritised as part of the AHA Centre Work Plan 2020, allowing the AHA Centre to communicate and promote its work throughout the implementation process. Strong presence, inclusiveness, and a sound monitoring and communications platforms will support the implementation of strategy into real working outcomes.

“At this stage, increasing dialogue sessions or workshops between the AHA Centre and its partners would be beneficial, helping to understand the initiatives and plans to realise those initiatives”

- The AHA Centre Partner
THE AHA CENTRE WORK PLAN 2020 WAS DEVELOPED BASED ON THE ASPIRATIONS AND GUIDANCE OF:

- ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER)
- Agreement on the Establishment of the AHA Centre
- ASEAN Vision 2025 on Disaster Management
- AHA Centre Mission and Vision
- AADMER Work Programme 2016-2020
- AHA Centre’s lessons learned and various consultants’ reports.

THE AHA CENTRE WORK PLAN 2020 PUT RESOURCE MOBILISATION AND COMMUNICATIONS AS ONE OF ITS FOUR PRIORITIES. IT AIMS TO STRENGTHEN THE CAPACITY OF THE AHA CENTRE THROUGH:

- Capacity enhancement of the AHA Centre in project development and management, and donor relations
- Strategy development for financing and resource mobilisation to ensure long-term sustainability
- Establishment of alternative financing mechanisms and innovative partnership frameworks
- Development and institutionalisation of an effective mechanism for programme development, monitoring, evaluation and reporting in the AHA Centre
- Strengthening of multi-stakeholders communications and brand awareness of the AHA Centre
A key element for the success of future AHA Centre partnerships, as well as its overall working environment, lies within strengthened and defined resource mobilisation mechanisms. Standardising core funding mechanisms, engaging and preparing required resources, and having systems in place to support resource mobilisation will be AHA Centre’s priorities to ensure its sustainable expansion. Such a state will ensure stronger results and a more fluent working context, creating an environment that more easily facilitates the engagement of strong and mutually-beneficial partnerships.

If possessing solid strategy and planning is the engine of an organisation’s machine, then a strong resource mobilisation mechanism forms the oil that keeps the engine in drive. The programmes, activities and objectives set out within a range of partnerships can only be achieved with the resources to undertake the span of envisaged work, and the ability to identify, access, organise and mobilise required resources will therefore be a key focus for the AHA Centre in the coming years. In reality, without strong resource mobilisation, plans and strategy remain just that; a vision only. Since its early days, resource mobilisation has been somewhat of a sticking point for the AHA Centre, and while it has overcome this gap on many occasions through hard work and adaptation, increasing the strength of resource mobilisation mechanisms forms a key factor in ensuring the AHA Centre works within an environment that is sustainable and viable.

As part of the AHA Centre Work Plan 2020, resource mobilisation will be strengthened through a number of avenues, particularly identification, funding, capacity and knowledge, and overall mobilisation processes. Identification of key resources will become more strategic and innovative, particularly relating to partner opportunities, as well as shifting focus to alternative modes and resource pools. Human resources, knowledge and capacity will continue to be a focus for strong resource mobilisation. As the AHA Centre continues to build internal ASEAN skills and knowledge, opportunities to engage
The AHA Centre Knowledge Series

#2 AHA Centre Partnership

The AHA Centre will further explore and expand its horizons in the partnership sphere, taking steps further on from its current partnership operating environment, and moving into a new realm of possibilities and opportunities. Focusing on non-traditional partners and support mechanisms, as well as formations such as collaborative agreements, reflect an even more ideal state within the ever-changing emergency management environment.

**EXPANDING THE PARTNER BASE**

The AHA Centre will further explore and expand its horizons in the partnership sphere, taking steps further on from its current partnership operating environment, and moving into a new realm of possibilities and opportunities. Focusing on non-traditional partners and support mechanisms, as well as formations such as collaborative agreements, reflect an even more ideal state within the ever-changing emergency management environment.

With much talk of strategy, the AHA Centre has realised the opportunity to widen its scope and become more strategic within partnerships themselves. Adding to the knowledge and experience gained through partnerships over the previous years, the order, direction and assuredness that strong organisational strategy provides then allows the AHA Centre to identify, understand and engage partners in a more targeted and strategic fashion. Holding a strong partner portfolio, understanding the specific value that each partner can offer, and having firm and clear relationships with key individuals throughout the partnerships will allow the AHA Centre to increase its efficiency, achieve its objectives and improve overall impact throughout all aspects of its work. A defined partnership strategy as part of the AHA Centre’s overall strategy will be an area of priority and a focus of attention in the years to come.

New partnership engagements, that move outside of the well-known path in disaster management, present a range of unbridled opportunity for the AHA Centre to strengthen its support mechanisms. The impact of disaster is felt by all corners of ASEAN community, public, private and government alike, and therefore, the opportunity to engage such a wide stakeholder range, all with a clear interest in a prepared and responsive region, is an opportunity that the AHA Centre will strategically explore. Initial steps have already been taken towards engaging such ‘non-traditional’ partners, with the AHA Centre recently engaging a variety of foundations and private sector partners to support its work.

Strong resource mobilisation provides benefit to the partnership space on two significant levels. Primarily, partners can be engaged as strategic stakeholders within the development of stronger resource mobilisation mechanisms, whether funding, material support, or input of specific technical knowledge and assistance. Secondly, and integrally, the results of strong resource mobilisation within the AHA Centre will strengthen results overall, notwithstanding objectives designed within partnership engagements and programming. Not only does strong resource mobilisation form an attractive element for partner engagement, but also allows for an environment in which outcomes can be better achieved and evidenced, only adding to confidence and willingness of partners to work alongside the AHA Centre.

“**When we began working with the AHA Centre, both of our organisations were in a transitional phase. Since then, we have grown significantly, and the opportunities for mutually beneficial collaboration have multiplied**”

- The AHA Centre Partner
“Mapping the potential expertise, areas of working of all existing agencies that have been engaged with AHA Centre so far to get more information and help AHA Centre analyse the strength of each potential partner in order to have more fruitful and strong partnership”

– The AHA Centre Partner

THE ‘NEW’ AHA CENTRE

The AHA Centre will continue to keep one eye to the road ahead, and maintain full comprehension of its overall changing context. It will remain engaged and innovative with the developing global emergency management environment, and importantly, be fully aware of its own developing position within this environment. The AHA Centre will be prepared to take on increasing responsibility and leadership, as it shifts its role further towards the position that is set out in its founding goals.

As the AHA Centre continues in its development, as does the entire external world it operates within. Recognition and preparation for such change will display to all that the AHA Centre is truly responsive, aware and reflective of its surrounding context. At times, it may be easy to become trapped in the ‘now’, and when caught like this, the ‘now’ can quickly become the past. As envisaged in the ASEAN Vision 2025 on Disaster Management, if the AHA Centre is to truly maintain its relevance and attractiveness to partners, it must always remain ahead of the times, promoting innovation, planning, and generally taking on change and new ideas with a responsive and active organisational attitude. Such an outlook is particularly relevant within a transforming disaster management sector, so heavily influenced by climate change, technological updates and political movements, amongst a host of other factors. It is a sector that evolves and strives to remain up-to-date and ahead of all impending impacts, and the AHA Centre, together with its partners, will therefore continue to engage with the leaders of innovation and change.

For the AHA Centre itself, and by extension for its partners, self-awareness and understanding is essential. Elements that built the AHA Centre, elements that were the cornerstone of partnerships, are without doubt going to change and evolve, and this will continue to be embraced by all parties within the AHA Centre’s movement. Quite literally, the AHA Centre will stop being ‘new’, and as it continues to develop and achieve outcomes in the areas previously discussed and more, the meaning of ‘success’, and the situation in which success is framed, will change with it. Within and outside of the partnership space, the AHA Centre will take on an increasingly outward focus, quite literally becoming the innovators and leaders within and outside the ASEAN region, as envisaged in both the 2025 vision and the ‘One ASEAN, One Response’ declaration. The AHA Centre will harness the potential it has created, and take it to the next level, implementing innovative and comprehensive large-scale actions with both partners and individually. Understanding not only its current context, but its future, will effectively support its transition through to the end of the decade.

Overall, the AHA Centre was developed to be a coordinator and a leader within the ASEAN region and beyond, and this end result will increasingly become important within the AHA Centre’s partnerships and general working space. While the AHA Centre will continue, and never cease, act as a sponge for taking on as much information, knowledge and skill as possible, it will increasingly become the repository and source of information, capacity and skills to be accessed and used for benefit by partners and the wider ASEAN community. Within these terms, the AHA Centre’s partnerships may also face great change, and not only through being more strategic and efficient in value for the AHA Centre itself. Partnerships will begin to develop in which the AHA Centre becomes the primary provider of resources, knowledge and skills transfer, becoming the global model and example for others. And this, ultimately, forms the foundation of the vision and the overall objectives that drive the AHA Centre’s existence.
“The AHA Centre is the regional leader in this field, and our partnership with them has opened up new possibilities to work with and provide direct services to ASEAN Member States”

- The AHA Centre Partner

The AHA Centre would like to express its deepest gratitude and appreciation to all ASEAN Dialogue Partners and partners to the AHA Centre who had a hand in our successes and development over the years. Without you, this great movement would not be where it is today. May be continue to grow, learn and share together well into the years to come.
The AHA Centre Knowledge Series

#2 AHA Centre Partnership

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)

The Government of China

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

The Government of Japan

World Food Programme (WFP)

The Government of Australia

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

The European Union

United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot (UNHRD)

The Government of New Zealand

AADMER Partnership Group

Global Initiative on Disaster Risk Management (GiDRM)

Corporate Citizen Foundation (CCF)

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

Direct Relief

The Government of United States of America

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

The Government of United States of America

Corporate Citizen Foundation (CCF)

United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot (UNHRD)

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

Direct Relief

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

Shaw Foundation
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<td>ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response</td>
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<td>ADInet</td>
<td>ASEAN Disaster Information Network</td>
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<td>COP</td>
<td>Conference of the Parties</td>
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<td>DELSA</td>
<td>Disaster Emergency Logistic System for ASEAN</td>
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<td>Disaster Monitoring and Response System</td>
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BOOKS OF THE AHA CENTRE KNOWLEDGE SERIES

#1 DARE TO DREAM CARE TO SHARE
#2 AHA CENTRE PARTNERSHIP
#3 DISASTER EMERGENCY LOGISTIC SYSTEM FOR ASEAN (DELSA)
#4 ASEAEMERGENCY RESPONSE AND ASSESSMENT TEAM (ASEAN-ERAT)
#5 AHA CENTRE EXECUTIVE (ACE) PROGRAMME
#6 COORDINATING REGIONAL DISASTER EMERGENCY RESPONSE
#7 COORDINATING UNITY
#8 THE STORY OF THE AHA CENTRE IN PICTURES
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ONE ASEAN ONE RESPONSE