



ONE ASEAN
ONE RESPONSE

THE COLUMN

THE AHA CENTRE NEWS BULLETIN

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HIGHLIGHT

The AHA Centre and European Union announce support for humanitarian and emergency response in ASEAN

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AHA CENTRE

ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management

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EDITOR'S NOTE



HI READERS,

With 2020 well on the road, the Column Volume 58 is here to get you up-to-date with all things happening at the AHA Centre – and across the ASEAN disaster management spectrum – from the last short period of time.

The Highlight welcomes a great new programme to the AHA Centre, with the opening of the EU-SAHA, which will see the European Union supporting ASEAN disaster management through the development of AHA Centre capacity, as well as ASEAN capacity in general. Insight then takes an interesting look into the modification of weather, a technology used to support the reduction of flooding impact in Jakarta during early 2020.

We get a great insight into internships at the AHA Centre with the Other Side this month developed by a guest writer, while the AHA Diary gives readers a little background on the Centre's recent annual planning event. We also introduce one of our new partners to our readers, namely the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency.

We hope all of our readers are safe and healthy during these unforeseen times globally!

The Editor



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THE AHA CENTRE AND EUROPEAN UNION ANNOUNCE SUPPORT FOR HUMANITARIAN AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE IN ASEAN

To support ASEAN endeavours to enhance disaster response capacity, in 2020 the European Union (EU) and the AHA Centre launched a EUR 10 million programme supporting the AHA Centre's work, named the "Integrated Programme in Enhancing the Capacity of AHA Centre and ASEAN Emergency Response Mechanisms", or in short known as the EU-SAHA programme. This new initiative aims to strengthen the capacity and sustainability of the AHA Centre to achieve operational excellence in disaster monitoring and emergency response, as well as enhance mechanisms for ASEAN leadership to 'respond as one' through excellence and innovation in disaster management.

In the wake of the Central Sulawesi earthquake and tsunami in Indonesia, the AHA Centre was among the first humanitarian agencies that arrived on the ground to provide humanitarian assistance. The AHA Centre highlighted its unwavering commitment in assisting ASEAN Member States (AMS), and again proved instrumental in assisting the Indonesian Disaster Management Agency (BNPB) in coordinating humanitarian aid by utilising available ASEAN mechanisms. The project is expected to also leverage the expertise of the EU's Emergency Response Coordination Center (ERCC), which operates under the EU's Civil Protection Mechanism and has a similar scope of work in the EU as the AHA Centre does in ASEAN.

The Executive Director of the AHA Centre, Ms Adelina Kamal, expressed her appreciation for the launch of the programme. "The EU SAHA programme will enable the AHA Centre to strengthen the entire spectrum of the ASEAN Declaration on One ASEAN One Response, adopted by the ASEAN Leaders in September 2016. It will enable the AHA Centre to further enhance our capacity to facilitate ASEAN's collective response to large-scale disasters inside the region, maximising further our coordination potentials as shown in multiple responses in 2018. Not only that, the EU SAHA will also allow us to study what it takes to facilitate collective response outside the region and learn from the EU, who has done it, through comparative studies and knowledge exchange".

The Secretary-General of ASEAN, Dato Lim Jock Hoi, recognised EU's support, stating that "As an important partner of ASEAN, the European Union's contribution to the AHA Centre will play a pivotal role in advancing ASEAN closer towards realising its vision as a global leader in disaster management. By supporting ASEAN's hallmark emergency response mechanism, the European Union ensures the continued development of disaster management assets and capacities at the regional and national levels in the ASEAN region".



Written by : Ina Rachmawati and Dipo Summa / AHA Centre

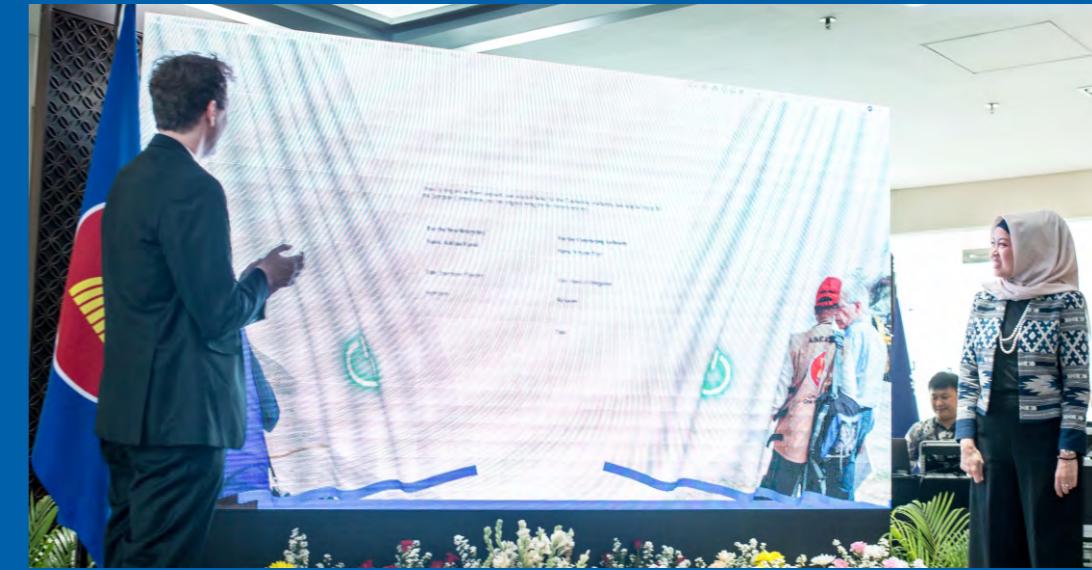
It is the AHA Centre's hope that through this new programme, the ASEAN region will become more resilient and more proactive in disaster mitigation and prevention. Much has been achieved to this point, but efforts must be sustained to realise the outcomes of the ASEAN Vision 2025 on Disaster Management. The ASEAN region is one of the most disaster-prone regions in the world, having experienced more than 50% of overall global disaster mortalities during the period of 2004-2014. The aim of the new EU programme is to substantially reduce disaster losses in lives and in the economic, social, physical and environmental assets of ASEAN Member States. It also aims to support joint responses to disaster emergencies through concerted national efforts, and intensified regional and international cooperation.



ASEAN REGION
HOPE TO BECOME

MORE RESILIENT, AND
MORE PROACTIVE

IN DISASTER MITIGATION
AND PREVENTION



1-2 The Executive Director of the AHA Centre Ms Adelina Kamal and the European Union Ambassador to ASEAN, H.E. Igor Driesmans during the launch of EU SAHA at the Asean Secretariat in Jakarta.

3 ASEAN Secretary-General H.E. Dato Lim Jock Hoi, stated that ASEAN is one of the most prone regions in the world as it suffered over 50% of casualties post-disaster from 2004 to 2014.



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**REPORTED
DISASTERS**
throughout the ASEAN
region in January 2020

GENERAL REVIEW OF JANUARY 2020

A significant change in the number of disaster occurrences was observed for the month of January 2020, with a 56% decrease of all disasters in comparison to the previous five-year average, and a majority of registered disasters were flood events. All but one of the recorded disasters took place in Indonesia. There were, however, significant increases compared to five-year averages of affected people (13% increase), internally displaced people (86%), and damaged houses (8%), due primarily to high monsoon activity in the region, with winds exhibiting convergence patterns (leading to formation of clouds and eventually precipitation) according to the Indonesian Meteorology, Climatology, and Geophysics Agency (BMKG). Overall, the number of occurrences decreased, but the disasters affected more people compared to the previous five-year averages.

There was also a significant increase in the number of casualties for the month of January, up 63% compared to the five-year average, with the number of injuries also increasing by 32%, despite the life-saving mechanisms of the ASEAN Member States being effectively put into place. Such increased disaster severity may be an indication of the effects of a changing climate. In terms of geophysical hazards, the phreatic eruption of the Taal Volcano in the Philippines on January 12 spewed ash across Metro Manila, and the Northern, Central, and Southern Luzon regions, causing widespread cancellations of classes, work, and flights, and significant losses for the agricultural sector (US\$63 million). The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS) issued an Alert Level 4 (out of five levels), or hazardous eruption possible within hours to days, due to the volcanic activity. On 26 January, decreased volcanic activities prompted PHIVOLCS to downgrade that alert level. Taal Volcano's eruption contributed significantly to the number of displaced people in this month's figures, with an estimated 459,300 people living within the volcano's 14-kilometer danger zone.

MONTHLY DISASTER REVIEW AND OUTLOOK

DISASTER MONITORING & ANALYSIS
(DMA) UNIT, AHA CENTRE **JANUARY 2020**

DISASTER COMPARISON IN NUMBERS

■ WHITE BAR | JANUARY 2020 ■ RED BAR | JANUARY IN FIVE-YEAR AVERAGE

Drought	-	1	Indonesia	10	16
Flood	7	16	Malaysia	-	3
Landslide	2	3	The Philippines	1	3
Storm	-	1	Singapore	-	1
Volcano	1	-	Thailand	-	1
Wind	1	4	Viet Nam	-	1
Total	11	25	Total	11	25

(covering the period of Weeks 01-05 in 2020 and 2015-2019 average)

SEASONAL OUTLOOK

Written by: Keith Landicho and Lawrence Anthony Dimailig

The ASEAN Specialised Meteorological Centre (ASMC) expects drier conditions for the month of February over Sumatra, Peninsular Malaysia and northern parts of Borneo and the Philippines. These conditions are expected to last until the end of March and extend to some parts of Thailand. However, wetter conditions are expected with increasing chances over the southeastern part of the maritime continent in the following months, which are expected to ease in the last week of March.

For temperature conditions, on one hand, the ASMC expects warmer conditions over much of the maritime continent and shall progressively affect parts of Mainland Southeast Asia in the last week of March. On the other hand, colder conditions are expected to occur and last until the third week of February over northeastern parts of the northern ASEAN region.

The Madden-Julian Oscillation (MJO), characterised by an eastward spread of large regions of enhanced and suppressed tropical rainfall, is expected to be in Phase 7 of 8 towards the end of January 2020. This means the enhanced rainfall will continue to move eastward into the western Pacific and eventually dissipate in the central Pacific. There are signs of a weak MJO emerging in the Maritime Continent in mid-February, but is forecasted to weaken. This weak MJO is also forecasted to reemerge over the Indian Ocean towards the end of March. This development may contribute to wetter conditions in the Southern Maritime Continent as predicted by the models.

DISCLAIMER

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

Data Sources : ASEAN Disaster Information Network, ASEAN Specialised Meteorological Centre

01
DISASTER20
DISASTERS

REGIONAL TALLY

	FEBRUARY 2020	FEBRUARY IN FIVE-YEAR AVERAGE
• Number of recorded significant disasters	21	20
• Number of affected people	436,183	223,181
• Number of internally displaced people	47,365	19,339
• Number of damaged houses	33,169	8,256
• Number of casualties	9	14
• Number of injured people	-	90
• Number of missing people	-	3

(covering the period of Weeks 06-09 in 2020 and 2015-2019 average)

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REPORTED
DISASTERS
throughout the
ASEAN region
in January 2020MONTHLY DISASTER
REVIEW AND OUTLOOKDISASTER MONITORING & ANALYSIS
(DMA) UNIT, AHA CENTRE

FEBRUARY 2020

DISASTER COMPARISON IN NUMBERS

■ WHITE BAR | FEBRUARY 2020 ■ RED BAR | FEBRUARY IN FIVE-YEAR AVERAGE



(covering the period of Weeks 06-09 in 2020 and 2015-2019 average)

GENERAL REVIEW OF FEBRUARY 2020

The 21 disaster occurrences for the month of February 2020 was similar to the five-year average for the month (20). A majority of the recorded disasters were flood events in different regions across Indonesia, most of which occurred towards the end of February. A single flooding event in the Johor State in Malaysia was also recorded at the end of the month. Adding to this, four landslides were recorded to have occurred in Indonesia for this month, including in Bandung Regency in the second week, and three during the last week of the month in Tasikmalaya district, Bandongan district, and Magelang Regency. Based on this, significant differences related to five-year disaster impact averages were observed. This included a 95% increase in the number of affected people, more than double the amount of internally displaced people, and four times the number of damaged houses. There was, however, a 36% decrease in the number of casualties alongside no reports of injured and missing people.

According to reports by the Indonesian Meteorology, Climatology, and Geophysics Agency (BMKG), the presence of two tropical cyclones (TC) – TC Esther in Gulf of Carpentaria and TC Ferdinand in the Indian Ocean – influenced the heavy rainfall that caused flooding events. Accordingly, based on the Climate Forecast System (CFS) of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), average precipitation in millimeters peaked twice for the month of February on the island of Java. The first peak occurred in the second week with the second at the end of the month, supporting the cause of the flooding that took place at the end of February. Additionally, based on the CFS (which assimilates ground, air, aircraft, and satellite observations) findings, maximum precipitation differences for the month of February 2020 compared to five-year average rainfall values reached an approximate increase of 100 millimetres.

Based on disaster comparisons, the number of flooding events are 13.33% higher than the five-year average. Despite this relatively low increase in numbers, there was a significant increase in figures related to impact of the disasters. The increase in the extent and severity of the impacts may be an indication of a changing climate. However, the efforts of Indonesia's National Disaster Management Authority (BNPB), and measures implemented to curtail the impacts of disasters resulted in the decrease to numbers of casualties. Additionally, the dramatic increase in the number of damaged houses could further support the call for more climate change-adaptive and resilient structures in disaster-stricken regions.

SEASONAL OUTLOOK

According to the ASEAN Specialised Meteorological Centre (ASMC), enhanced chances of below-normal rainfall or drier conditions are expected over northern parts of Sumatra, Kalimantan, and Sulawesi, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Singapore, Malaysia, and the southern regions of Myanmar, Thailand, Viet Nam, and of the Philippines for the March-May 2020 season. For regions south of the equator, the ASMC predicts above-normal rainfall or wetter conditions. Temperature-wise, most parts of the ASEAN region are expected to continue experiencing warmer conditions for the March-May 2020 period.

Haze outlook for the ASEAN region during March-May 2020 is expected to show increased hotspot activities due to drier conditions. A deterioration of haze situation is displayed for the Northern Mekong sub-region, according to the ASMC. The onset of increased rainfall is foreseen to subdue hotspot activities and improve the haze situation in the region. Lastly, the haze situation in the southern ASEAN region is expected to remain subdued, but localised hotspots may emerge during the occasional dry weather.

Written by : Keith Landicho and Lawrence Anthony Dimailig

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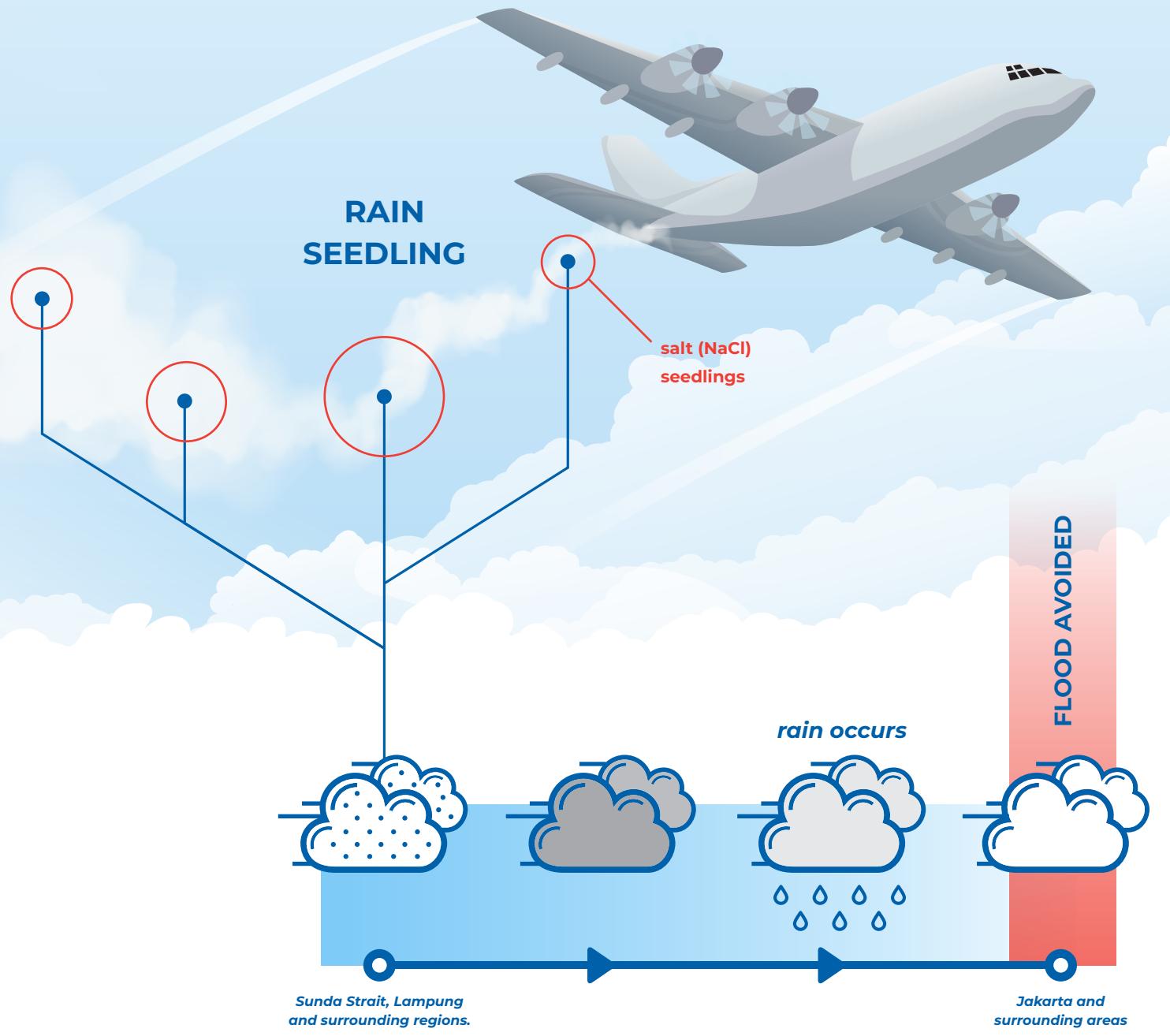


MOVING RAIN TO AVOID A FLOOD

The significant flooding that hit Jakarta and its surrounds on 1 January 2020 required significant attention from the Government of Indonesia, prompting the National Disaster Management Authority (Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Bencana – BNPB) to immediately conduct a coordination meeting with related parties. During this meeting a significant decision was made to attempt to alleviate flooding in Jakarta and its surrounds. This plan was to utilise Weather Modification Technology – or WMT. The Indonesian Agency for Assessment and Application of Technology (Badan Pengajian dan Penerapan Teknologi – BPPT) had developed a strategy by conducting an analysis of the growth of clouds that cause rain across the Jakarta metropolitan area. These clouds originate from the west and northwest of area, from the Sunda Strait, Lampung and surrounding regions.

On Thursday, January 2, 2020, the BPPT together with the TNI (Indonesian National Armed Forces) undertook preparations of required equipment and rain seedling materials, as well as an aeroplanes including a CASA CN-295 and a Hercules. On the morning of January 3, prediction and monitoring of cloud growth and movement was carried out, with all potential rainclouds moving towards Jakarta to be planted by plane using salt (NaCl) seedlings. Seeding clouds with salt is done to make clouds heavier, therefore causing rain to fall, and doing so in this case before the clouds reached the flooded areas of Jakarta. This aimed to or at least to decrease rain intensity once clouds arrived in the area, as well as reduce and re-distribute rainwater to support the flooded areas. WMT activities are also used for other disaster relief operations, such as putting out forest and land fires, filling reservoirs, and wetting fire-prone peatlands. WMT can also be utilised to increase river elevation for irrigation, so as to increase agricultural production.

Written by : Ina Rachmawati | Source : BNPB publication



Indonesia has implemented reliable WMT activities in overcoming water deficits, floods and fires since 1997. This has also increasingly included the control of flooding through optimal implementation of WMT. It can be utilised in most conditions and weather seasons, and may also be utilised to support national strategic projects and important national activities, by reducing smoke disruption ensuring a location is unobstructed by extreme weather conditions.



SWEDISH CIVIL CONTINGENCIES AGENCY

2020 will see a new project implemented by the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency or MSB known as LACER – or Leveraging ASEAN Capacities for Emergency Response through Support from EU Member States Civil Protection Agencies.

LACER's specific objectives are to (1) strengthen the capacity and sustainability of the AHA Centre towards achieving operational excellence in disaster monitoring, preparedness and emergency response, and; (2) enhance mechanisms for ASEAN leadership to respond as one, through excellence and innovation in disaster management.

This EU funded project will be implemented through a consortium led by the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB), alongside the Estonian Rescue Board (ERB). For Volume 58 we take a look into the first of these new partners, the MSB, with the next volume to provide us an in-depth look into the ERB.



THE SWEDISH CIVIL CONTINGENCIES AGENCY (MSB)

The Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency – or Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap in Swedish – is a government authority mandated to enhance and support societal capacities for preparedness, prevention and response to emergencies and crises. MSB's Resilience Building Section ultimately aims to contribute to strengthened resilience in disaster prone countries. It represents more than 30 years of experience in disaster risk management and international operations. MSB has experience in humanitarian and development aid across countries with severe records of disasters, thus enabling it to use the knowledge acquired from overseas humanitarian work in national response, preparedness and mitigation. MSB holds experience across the entire risk spectrum, ranging from everyday hazards to major disasters in Sweden and internationally, as well as also throughout the whole disaster risk management process. MSB ultimately aims to contribute to strengthened resilience in disaster prone countries – ensuring it is particularly qualified to support other disaster risk management actors such as the AHA Centre.

MSB has a total staff of approximately 900, and an international response roster of over 1,500 experts for international operations. Furthermore, MSB can draw upon its vast pool of domestic experts for long-term capacity

Written by : Ina Rachmawati | Photo : AHA Centre

development projects. Trainings on risk and vulnerability analysis, contingency planning, early warning systems and overall disaster management are examples of activities that MSB has carried out. Within the area of response, MSB continuously engages in and supports operational responses, while at the same time being involved in the development of methods and approaches aiming to enhance preparation and risk reduction.

Internationally, MSB recently led a consortium on Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA) in the Programme for Disaster Risk Assessment and Mapping (IPA DRAM), as well as participating in IPA Floods, the IPA Civil Protection Cooperation project, and supported the Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative (DPPI) with capacity development initiatives. Furthermore, MSB is one of the founders of the International Humanitarian Partnership (IHP), a network of NDMOs in Europe who mobilise personnel and material to emergencies across the globe. Previously, MSB has gained experience on disaster preparedness in the ASEAN region through an ongoing International Training Programme in disaster management, working with countries including Cambodia and the Philippines, as well as currently cooperating with the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre on a programme building resilience through inclusive and climate-adaptive disaster risk reduction in Asia-Pacific. This has ensured that MSB holds a network of experts exposed to and with experience from the ASEAN region to support the LACER project activities.



ONE ASEAN
ONE RESPONSE

AHA CENTRE ANNUAL PLANNING WORKSHOP



THE WORKSHOP HAD THREE KEY OBJECTIVES:

**TO DISCUSS
THE PRIORITIES**

**TO REFLECT BACK ON
THE ACHIEVEMENTS**

**TO CONTINUE THE
ONGOING EXERCISE**

To kick-off 2020, the AHA Centre conducted an annual planning workshop from 20-22 January. All AHA Centre staff attended the organisation's internal planning workshop, including staff that are based outside of the Jakarta head office. The regular annual activity also formed an opportunity for everyone in the AHA Centre to meet, all in the same place and at the same time.

The workshop had three key objectives. The first was to discuss the priorities and goals for the AHA Centre during the year 2020. The second objective was to reflect back on the achievements, as well as the lessons learned, from the previous year and determine how the AHA Centre can utilise such lessons and experiences in its upcoming work. The final objective was to continue the ongoing exercise of rethinking the future direction of the AHA Centre in relation to disaster management in the ASEAN region. The AHA Centre staff discussed the results from discussions during the strategic thematic forum conducted in November 2019, as part of the 8th anniversary commemoration of the AHA Centre's establishment. The rethinking exercise will also contribute to the upcoming drafting of the new cycle of the AADMER Work Programme for the years 2021 – 2025.

The workshop also had some lighter moments, with AHA Centre staff using the opportunity to carry out some team-building and bonding activities. Good team collaboration is an important element of all the AHA Centre's work.

At the end of the workshop, the Executive Director Ms. Adelina Kamal thanked all staff for taking the time to attend the activity. Reflecting back to 2019, the Ms. Kamal also showed appreciation to everyone for helping the AHA Centre in achieving many of its objectives. Going forward, she hopes that such good work will continue to 2020 and beyond. Ms. Kamal also highlighted the changing humanitarian landscape in the region, reminding all that the AHA Centre must continue to creatively reinvent itself if it is to remain relevant for ASEAN Member States and the ASEAN region in the years to come.

Written by : Ina Rachmawati | Photo Credit : AHA Centre





JUSTIN CHIN

AHA CENTRE INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE (DISASTER MONITORING & ANALYSIS)

Recently the AHA Centre has been supported by Justin Chin, undertaking an internship on disaster monitoring and analysis. The following article is an insight into the experience from Justin, including the experiences and learnings he gained during the time.



Mr Chin had the opportunity to learn hands on experience in the AHA Centre activities with different stakeholders

Before I embarked on my disaster monitoring and analysis internship with the AHA Centre, the most closely related experiences and knowledge I could rely on was a passion in serving and empowering communities through volunteer work, using scientific knowledge on natural disasters from my undergraduate studies. My goal for this internship was to explore this field of humanitarian assistance and disaster management that was essentially entirely new to me. And as I look back on my internship journey, I can say what an eye-opening ride and valuable experience it has been!

The range of opportunities to learn and perform can be diverse in the AHA Centre, if only one is open and willing to venture even when the opportunity may lie outside of your skillset and speciality. This also means that the internship is never boring or repetitive – an exciting prospect for those who dislike mundane or office-bound work! I am glad that I approached the opportunities offered with an open mind to learn and gain experiences beyond my core role scope, even if they potentially distracted me from my everyday work. Of the many experiences and tasks worked on throughout my internship, I will focus on three of the highlights here.



Justin supported the 72-hour disaster response simulation of the 12th ASEAN-ERAT Induction Course in October 2019.

Written by : Justin Chin | Photo : AHA Centre

Firstly, the 12th ASEAN Emergency Response and Assessment Team (ASEAN-ERAT) Induction Course. It was a privilege to learn from experienced ASEAN-ERAT members and work alongside these veterans, who shared their stories and knowledge and patiently guided us through the intricacies of disaster response based on their unique perspectives from past deployments. As part of the exercise control team, I helped facilitate the 72-hour disaster response simulation, which gave me an overview and understanding of the simulation exercise progress and the preparation work that went into it even before the course began; a taste of running such a course and exercise. I also saw first-hand the bigger picture of how all the smaller segments of work come together to achieve the purpose and effectiveness of the ASEAN-ERAT operations on the ground. Ultimately, it was fulfilling to see all 23 course participants become qualified ASEAN-ERAT members who can respond to any natural disaster in ASEAN within 24 hours, and heartening to know that ASEAN has such an established regional response system.

Secondly, I got to contribute, through my own research project, to forming a country-specific statistical basis for recommendations on the AHA Centre's response actions at the ASEAN regional level. This also increased my understanding of the recent history of natural disasters and responses in the ASEAN region.

Thirdly, as part of the AHA Centre's response to the Lao PDR floods in September 2019, I monitored the disaster impacts and needs, contributed to the analysis work, and co-produced daily situation reports. It was a stressful and tiring period, with difficulties in obtaining quick and reliable information on the disaster situation, impacts and humanitarian needs. Flexibility was required to deal with the unpredictable changes as the disaster response unfolded. At the same time, this proved useful for honing my skills in information management and my understanding of the ASEAN regional mechanisms and frameworks in emergency response and disaster management, including how the AHA Centre transforms to an Emergency Response Organisation structure, and one of the AHA Centre's core operations and purpose of existence – emergency response.

Justin Chin is final year student from Nanyang Technological University, majoring in Environmental Earth Systems Science.

ONE ASEAN ONE RESPONSE



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ONE ASEAN
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ABOUT ASEAN

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

ABOUT THE AHA CENTRE

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

ABOUT AADMER

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