



ONE ASEAN  
ONE RESPONSE

# THE COLUMN

THE AHA CENTRE NEWS BULLETIN

VOL.78 | OCTOBER 2021



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Hi Readers,

In this month's volume of The Column we take the opportunity to meet the new Executive Director of the AHA Centre Mr. Lee Yam Ming, who took up his new position at the end of August this year. ED Lee is vastly experienced in the disaster-management field with more than a quarter of a century of work with the Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF) under his belt. He has held a wide range of leadership positions and has represented the SCDF in multiple ASEAN and other international forums.

The AHA Centre's 15<sup>th</sup> Governing Board meeting was held in October to discuss the activities during the June-September period and provide updates on the plans to mark the Centre's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. We report on the outcomes of the meeting.

We return again to the exciting AHackathon competition where seven teams from 11 countries were set disaster-management challenges to come up with innovative apps as solutions. Yohanes Paulus explains the vital role of the partnership between the AHA Centre and Impact Week and its emphasis on the concept of Design Thinking. This is further elucidated on by Gaynor Tanyang who provides her own innovative recipe for success in humanitarian logistics, including the vital ingredient of an overflow of ideas.

A key element in disaster management that is as important as providing aid is the removal of waste and Judith Garcia Meese outlines the essential basics of disposing of waste, not only any debris caused by the disaster but also food and medical waste created in the recovery process. Judith also highlights the role that local communities can play in this important work.

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# RECIPE FOR INNOVATION



A snapshot of the cheering participants, coaches and judges during the AHackathon Awarding and Closing Ceremonies.

To "hack" means to crack a problem or discover its solution. In information technology, it has the connotation of breaking into security systems. Hackathons are competitions designed to do the first. Some hackathons are hardware-based, like designing a new product, some are software-based, but there are hackathons that are really about exploring new solutions to old problems in the traditional non-tech-based sense – that is looking at business processes (in our case, development processes) and how these can be more appropriate, more responsive, more impactful.

Risdianto Irawan and I had a simple programme for the AHackathon when we started to plan the event. The idea was to set the rules and parameters, launch the clock, check-in with the teams, then wait 48 hours to complete and collect the final entries. The game changer was when HELP Logistics introduced us to Impact Week and launchlabs. That changed the way we organised the AHackathon for the better.

Impact Week is a not-for-profit organisation that promotes innovation and entrepreneurship skill development in developing and emerging economies by using Design Thinking to develop sustainable growth solutions. Meanwhile, launchlabs Berlin supports start-ups and teams in applying design thinking and other agile approaches to optimise the process of innovation to benefit organisations.

Michael Koegel of Impact Week designed the three-day event using the Design Thinking process. He brought in 10 professional Design Thinking coaches to guide the AHackathon teams from problem sensing to ideation, prototyping, validation and pitch preparation. The coaches were start-uppers themselves or had a rich

experience coaching other start-ups. If I were competing in AHackathon, just the opportunity to learn about the Design Thinking process and go through it with an expert coach would already be a win in itself!

If you came to witness how through AHackathon, more than 50 students and professionals who knew nothing about humanitarian logistics, came together, some of them meeting for the first time, and within 48 hours came up with apps to solve our six HELiX design challenges, you would be as amazed as I was at how that was achieved within a very short period of time. You might think the apps were not impressive or groundbreaking but to me they were, and that is because I know that the hackers put their heart and soul into what they were doing to help the humanitarian community and disaster-at-risk communities to have the tools accessible to them to make better decisions and to be more resilient.

The problem-solving process would not have been a success without the mentors and experts who shared their knowledge and experience in humanitarian logistics. Part of the Design Thinking process is to interview users and experts. This subgroup in

Written by: Gaynor Tanyang | Photo Credit: AHA Centre

AHackathon included those experts on the topics that the teams were working on as well as community leaders, decision-makers and user groups - those who have experienced disasters and/or are the target users of the apps themselves. Organising the technical experts was the much easier part - with thanks to our partners who were always rolling up their sleeves for the AHA Centre: the United Nations Humanitarian Resource Depot (UNHRD) and World Food Programme, and our DELSA Satellite Warehouse hosts, Office of the Civil Defense of the Philippines and the Thailand Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation. I would also like to thank a good friend and colleague of mine who agreed to be a mentor at the last minute, Shirley Bolanos who wears many hats such as decision-maker (as part of the regional DRRM council), victim (she lives in the most disaster-prone region in the Philippines) and as a humanitarian worker who has responded to many disasters in the country.

And finally, kudos to the seven teams who devoted their time, energy, creativity and experience, you were the protagonists and main ingredients in the success of AHackathon!

## RECIPE FOR INNOVATION IN HUMANITARIAN LOGISTICS

### INGREDIENTS:

- On-point statement of the problem (user perspective is best)
- Overflow of ideas (no measuring cup required)
- New pairs of lenses for looking at the same problem
- Indomitable spirit of discovery
- "So what if, then what?" mindset
- There-must-be-a-better-way-to-do-this attitude

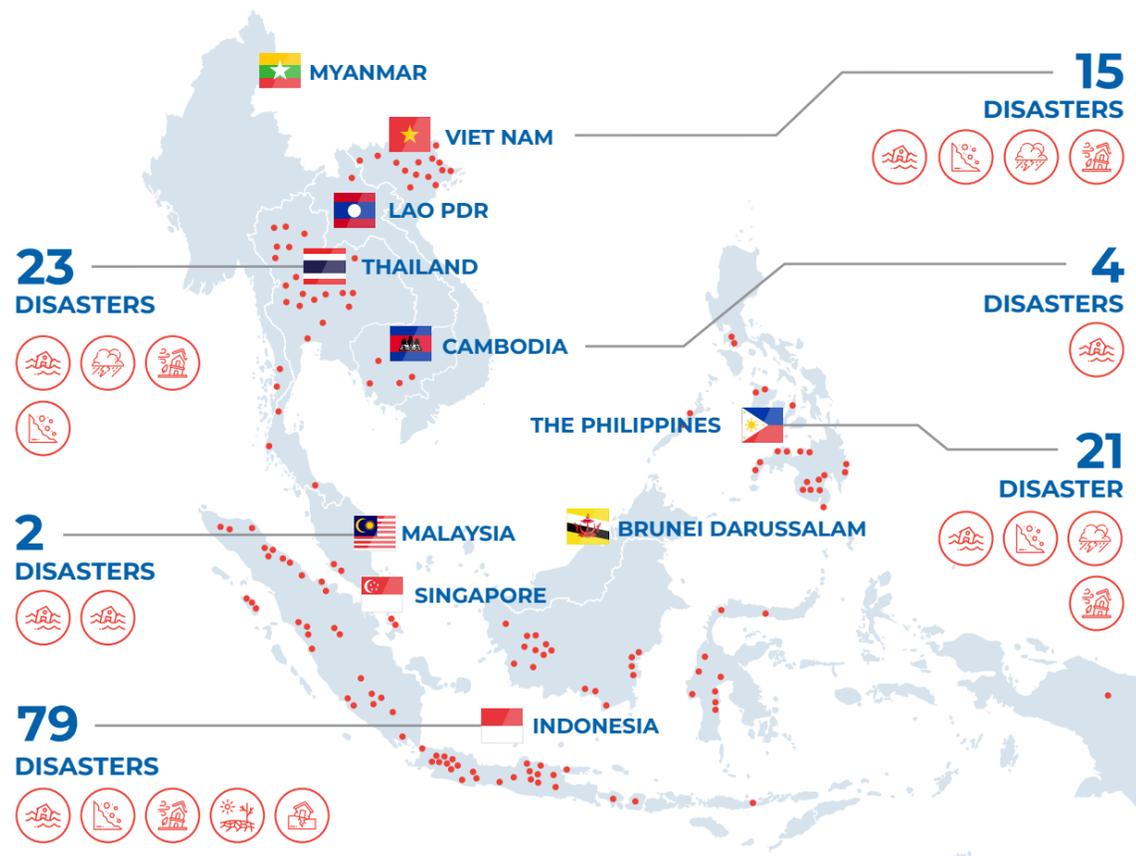
### STEPS:

- Try on new pairs of lenses to look at the problem then ask, "So what if? Then what?". Talk to different stakeholders who will use, support or oppose your idea. Repeat using your indomitable spirit of discovery.
- State the problem using the different lenses you have discovered. Be a child, be a victim, be a decision-maker, be a pregnant woman lining up for your service. What is preventing them from getting the most out of your service or idea?
- Brainstorm ideas, do not sift, pound nor crush. Let ideas run wild and overflow.
- Use what is left of your indomitable spirit of discovery to try out the solutions. Repeat the process until you feel you have nailed a human-centred solution. It should taste sweet, not leaving a bad taste in the process.
- Never give up. Just keep pushing forward.
- When you find the right solution, go back to step 1 to see how you can further improve your solution.



- 1 Oscar Ling Fang Jack of Team 1B Malaysia bagging 1<sup>st</sup> place for their SMART ADRA app.
- 2 Hisyam Ahmad of Team 1A Reksa Mandala accepting the prize for 2<sup>nd</sup> place for their Hologistics app.
- 3 Rey Mart Montescarlos from Team 5M-ResQ accepting 3<sup>rd</sup> place for their Res-Q app.
- 4 Trần Nam Khanh of Team 50 LQDTU giving a short speech for winning the Community's Choice Award.
- 5 AHackathon teams discussing and working on their projects using the Discord and Mural platforms.
- 6 Team 1A Reksa Mandala discussing their design.
- 7 Team 5M ResQ discussing their design.
- 8 Dr. Le Quan Tuan, Deputy Director, Department of Science, Technology and International Cooperation, Viet Nam Disaster Management Agency, announcing the 1<sup>st</sup> place winner.
- 9 Risdianto Irawan, ICT Senior Officer of the AHA Centre, talking about the use of technology in disaster management during expert interview by AHACKATHON teams.
- 10 AHackathon Closing Programme and Awarding Ceremonies.

Enjoy cooking up your new solutions! Be inspired by the ideas from other experts in [helix.ahacentre.org](https://helix.ahacentre.org)



**335 / 100,000** AFFECTED BY DISASTERS | **11 / 100,000** DISPLACED DUE TO DISASTERS

REGIONAL TALLY	OCTOBER 2021	OCTOBER IN FIVE-YEAR AVERAGE
• Number of recorded significant disasters	144	18
• Number of affected people	2,238,316	3,007,839
• Number of internally displaced people	108,124	131,753
• Number of damaged houses	160,514	81,607
• Number of fatalities	72	474
• Number of injured people	99	2,225
• Number of missing people	20	281

(covering the period of Weeks 40-43 in 2021 and 2016-2020 average)

# MONTHLY DISASTER REVIEW AND OUTLOOK

DISASTER MONITORING & ANALYSIS (DMA) UNIT, AHA CENTRE | OCTOBER 2021

## GENERAL REVIEW OF OCTOBER 2021

For the month of October 2021, a total of **144** disasters were reported. The ASEAN Member States that were affected were Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam. Most of the disasters (54.86%) occurred in Indonesia but the highest number of affected people was reported in the Philippines which comprised more than half of the tally for the month of October (55%). The share of the disaster-affected people for other ASEAN Member States was as follows: (1) Cambodia-0.66%, (2) Indonesia-25.40%, (3) Malaysia-0.08%, (4) Thailand-15.89%, and (5) Viet Nam-2.97%. October 2021 saw disasters **affecting 335 per 100,000 people\*** and **displacing 11 per 100,000 people\*** in the region, recording a 22.63% decrease and a 35.29% respectively, from the previous month. October 2021 accounts for **13.64% of the total disasters** (1,056) reported so far in the current year.

Most of the disasters that occurred in October 2021 were floods (62.5%) and this is consistently the most recorded type of disaster for October of the previous year and October on a five-year average (2016-2020). October 2021 saw hydrometeorological disasters (droughts, floods, rain-induced landslides, storms, winds) affecting 99.6% of the total affected persons for the month. The reported disasters in the region for October 2021 in comparison with the historical data (average for October 2016-2020) indicates that there were **8x more reported disasters; 1.34x fewer people affected; 1.22x fewer people displaced; 1.97x more houses affected to some extent; 6.58x fewer lives lost; 22.47x fewer people suffering injuries; and lastly, 14.05x fewer people reported missing.**

Sources: ASEAN Disaster Information Network (ADINet), ASEAN Disaster Monitoring and Response System (DMRS), ASEAN Specialised Meteorological Centre (ASMC), Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Bencana (BNPB) – Indonesia, Agensi Pengurusan Bencana Negara (NADMA) – Malaysia, Department of Disaster Management (DDM) – Myanmar, National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) – Philippines, Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (DDPM) – Thailand, Viet Nam Disaster Management Authority (VNDMA) - Viet Nam, Badan Meteorologi, Klimatologi dan Geofisika (BMKG) – Indonesia, Pusat Vulkanologi dan Mitigasi Bencana Geologi (PVMBG) – Indonesia, Department of Meteorology and Hydrology (DMH) – Myanmar, Philippine Institute for Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS) – Philippines, Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) - Philippines

Geophysically, 18 significant earthquakes (Magnitude ≥ 5.0) were reported by Indonesia's Badan Meteorologi, Klimatologi dan Geofisika (BMKG), Myanmar's Department of Meteorology and Hydrology (DMH), and the Philippine Institute for Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS). In Bali Indonesia, a magnitude 4.8 earthquake, albeit not a significant earthquake, affected 7,690 people and damaged 2,320 houses. Recent volcanic activity was reported for Ili Lewotolok (Alert Level III) and Semeru, Kerinci, Ibu, Karangetang, Krakatau (Alert Level II) in Indonesia, and Taal (Alert Level 2) and Kanlaon (Alert Level 1) in the Philippines

\*computed based on 2020 population data from worldometers.com

## ANALYSIS

According to the ASEAN Specialised Meteorological Centre (ASMC), compared with the average value from 2001-2020, during October 2021, rainfall was above-average over much of the northern ASEAN region and a mix of below- to above-average for the southern ASEAN region (Figure 1). The largest positive anomalies (wetter conditions) were detected over the eastern Mainland Southeast Asia for both satellite-derived rainfall estimates datasets (GSMaP-NRT and CMORPH-Blended). This is associated with the developments of Severe Tropical Storm KOMPASU. A second tropical storm, Tropical Storm LIONROCK, affected central Philippines at the beginning of October, which is the major reason for the positive anomalies in central Philippines and the ocean region around the Philippines. Negative anomalies (drier conditions) were recorded over western and northern parts of Borneo. For the rest of the ASEAN region, rainfall tended to be near-to above-average during October 2021.



(covering the period of Weeks 40-43 in 2021 and 2016-2020 average)  
\*Values in column are rounded-off to whole figure

## SEASONAL OUTLOOK

In the second half of October 2021, according to the ASMC, the Southwest Monsoon had transitioned into the inter-monsoon period. Climatologically, the inter-monsoon conditions are likely to prevail over the ASEAN region in the coming month of November as the conditions transition into the Northeast Monsoon by December. During this inter-monsoon period, prevailing winds are forecast to be generally light and variable in direction. Increased rainfall is expected, particularly over the areas of the ASEAN region near the equator, due to the equatorial proximity of the monsoon rain band.

In the coming three months (November 2021 to January 2022), the Maritime Continent and southeastern Mainland Southeast Asia are looking at an increased chance of above-normal rainfall. The areas with the highest chances are southern and eastern parts of the Maritime Continent. La Niña conditions have been detected and are now present according to the ASMC. This entails wetter-than-average rainfall conditions and cooler conditions in the region. Additionally, most models are predicting these conditions to last or be experienced until early 2022. As the month of October ended, a

negative Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) that brought greater precipitation east of the Indian Ocean was present and this negative IOD was expected to return to neutral in the month of November 2021 (positive IOD causes droughts in Southeast Asia). Temperatures that are warmer than usual are likely for much of the Maritime Continent and Myanmar in the coming three months (November 2021-January 2022).

The dry season over the southern ASEAN region ended in October 2021. Meanwhile, for the northern ASEAN region, the traditional dry season typically sets in by year-end.

Note from ASMC: The qualitative outlook is assessed for the region in general and based on the latest runs from models provided by the SEA RCC-Network LRF node. For specific updates on the national scale, the relevant ASEAN National Meteorological and Hydrological Services should be consulted.

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**DISCLAIMER**  
The 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>.

Written by: Keith Paolo Landicho, Sadhu Zukhruf Janottama, Lawrence Anthony Dimallig



# WASTE MANAGEMENT DURING DISASTERS

## SOME MATERIALS THAT MAY BE CLASSIFIED AS SOLID WASTE AFTER NATURAL DISASTERS HAVE OCCURRED:

- 1 Fallen trees, tree trunks, branches, palm leaves
- 2 Rubble and debris from damaged infrastructure such as steel, concrete, wood and bricks
- 3 Mud, ash, rocks
- 4 Electric lines, poles and cables
- 5 Garbage from food and water such as plastic water bottles, packaging and leftover food



## SOME OF THE RISKS THAT CAN ARISE FROM DISASTER WASTE ARE:

- 1 Nuisance from the stench from decomposing waste materials
- 2 Disease and bacterial infection from animals and vermin that scavenge through garbage piles
- 3 Direct contact with hazardous chemicals such as pesticides and acids
- 4 Cuts, scratches and abrasions from sharp objects

When saving lives during disasters, transporting food and water takes center stage, but managing and disposing of waste is equally important. If not given proper attention, solid and liquid waste can fast become a health hazard in affected communities. With the chaos that comes after emergencies, it is critical that waste be disposed of safely and properly.

When typhoons, earthquakes and other natural disasters occur, a lot of waste is already generated. We often see fallen trees, boulders and mud blocking roads, in addition to rubble from man-made structures like houses and buildings. Clearing operations often take place to ensure that roads are passable and safe for rescue teams and the delivery of much-needed supplies. In addition to the debris, waste generated from food packaging can pile up fast especially in evacuation centres.

If there is no existing waste-disposal site, a temporary area that is safe and far away from evacuation sites and human settlements should be designated for the piling of solid waste.

Written by : Judith Garcia Meese

Communal pits can also serve this purpose. Rubble and debris can be sorted, some of it can still be used, such as metal sheeting and wood.

When selecting the type of vehicle to be used to transport solid waste, things like generation rates and densities need to be considered. Routes are also important along with the distance between collection and disposal areas or dumping sites, be they temporary or permanent.

Local people also play an important role in managing waste in emergencies. Victims of natural disasters can help in keeping their own environment safe and sanitary. They can engage in clean-up operations, as focusing on tasks is one way of dealing with the trauma that natural disasters often inflict on people. This can also boost morale as they are directly engaged in improving their homes and communities.

Proper waste management can help keep away flies, dogs, snakes and other scavengers that have the potential to spread disease. Used medical supplies like syringes should also be disposed of properly.

Sources: <https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/DWMG.pdf> & [https://www.who.int/water\\_sanitation\\_health/hygiene/emergencies/solidwaste.pdf](https://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/hygiene/emergencies/solidwaste.pdf)

# AHACKATHON: BUILDING PARTNERSHIP IN INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY

Constructive engagement and networking with partners are among the key strengths of the AHA Centre.



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Supporting Partners



A strong example of this can be found in the recent staging of the AHackathon app design and programming competition in October, a component of the Humanitarian Emergency Logistics Innovation Expo (HELIX) held in May this year, organised by the AHA Centre and the Viet Nam Disaster Management Agency. The AHackathon united more than 50 participants in seven teams from 11 countries from ASEAN and beyond in fostering new innovative ideas and solving contemporary challenges in the field of humanitarian logistics and disaster management. Key to the success of this competition was the partnership between the AHA Centre and Impact Week, a non-profit organisation and programme dedicated to promoting innovation and entrepreneurship through the concept of Design Thinking.

Impact Week has been running similar events to the AHackathon since 2015 with over 2,000 students involved in the past, and Impact Week's latest partnership with the AHA Centre was brought about through mutual partnership with HELP Logistics, another longtime network of the AHA Centre and sponsor of Impact Week Jordan 2019.

As has been the case with many organisations, the pandemic in 2020 necessitated transition to virtual events, including HELIX itself and the AHackathon. Impact Week's expertise was crucial in this successful transition and the execution of the AHackathon as a fully virtual event. Furthermore, the AHackathon was special both because of its focus as an app programming competition, and the next-level integration of the Discord messaging software and MURAL collaborative design board as the platform for the competition – an aspect consistently praised by the participants, alongside the learning experience with humanitarian-logistics and disaster-management experts. In this regard, the execution of the AHackathon as a fully-online event was also further enhanced by the usage of launchlabs' Berlin virtual studio and green screen, a key technical implementation by Impact Week and



Michael Koegel and Tobias Wosowiecki broadcasting live during the event's opening day from launchlabs' virtual studio in Berlin.

Written by : Yohanes Paulus, DELSA Programme Assistant | Photo Credits: AHA Centre and Michael Koegel

launchlabs, which resulted in the online event's top-class professional quality streaming and recording.

Another key contribution and support from Impact Week in the AHackathon's execution was the steadfast and circumspect guidance of the coaches in guiding the participant teams through the Design Thinking approach to systematically reframe and conceptualise the challenges in the competition, enabling them to truly develop and implement their innovative ideas into working app prototypes aimed at solving the relevant issues and needs present in the field of humanitarian logistics.

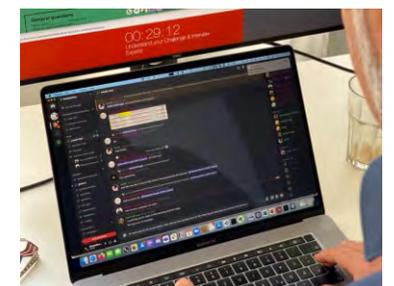
In conclusion, with its fruitful discussions, ideas and engagement with partners, the AHackathon has been a constructive experience and example of the strengths of innovation and cooperation; key aspects that will certainly shape the next steps of the AHA Centre especially as it entered its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary in November this year.



Michael Koegel, Design Thinking Coach and Organizer of Impact Week



Michael Koegel of Impact Week presenting during the Kick-Off Meeting before the AHackathon competition on 2 October 2021



Michael working with the MURAL collaborative virtual board used in the AHackathon competition.

THE PHILIPPINES

NOVA  
ELOIZA

Conducting the Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Training for Indigenous People of Maguindanao Province, Philippines in 2018.



Discussing activities at the Usapang Tanggulang Sibil Radio Programme for the Philippines Quarterly Nationwide Simultaneous Earthquake Drill.



Giving a speech during the Poster Making Contest conducted by OCD-BARMM as part of the celebration of the Philippines National Disaster Resilience Month 2019.



As Mattie Stepanek once said, “Unity is strength. When there is teamwork and collaboration, wonderful things can be achieved”. This is the perfect quote that I think of when we talk about this year’s AHA Centre Executive (ACE) Programme. Being chosen to join this programme was truly an honor, not only for me but for all the participants. Not everyone working in the field of disaster management gets to be part of this rare opportunity to learn and collaborate with some of the greatest minds in the field, and for that I am very privileged and thankful.

Though the methodology is quite different from previous batches, the AHA Centre still manages to deliver a comprehensive and effective training package for the ACE Programme’s Batch Seven. Aside from all relevant knowledge and information taught to us about disaster management in general, the programme has also introduced us to a variety of new online platforms that make the programme more exciting and interesting.

The ACE Programme is very important for me not only in terms of courses and learning but also in terms of collaboration. It has helped strengthen the partnership of all ASEAN member states to understand the vision of “One ASEAN, One Response” which was thoroughly discussed during our ASEAN Disaster Management Mechanism Course. The course further deepened our knowledge of the ASEAN Charter Principles, how the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response reflects its operational strategy, the core functions of the AHA Centre, and the different regional coordination tools. It also familiarized us with the interoperability or alignment between the AHA Centre disaster-management mechanisms and the various national mechanisms.

Written by: Nova Eloiza, ACE Programme Batch Seven - the Philippines

Photo Credit: Nova Eloiza Ybañez

True to the ACE Programme theme of “Preparing Future ASEAN Leaders in Disaster Management”, our lectures and courses prepare us not only to become effective leaders in disaster management but also to be contributors and key players in our respective countries’ disaster-resiliency initiatives. The Project Management Course with the learning objective to build and strengthen our competency to design, plan and monitor projects, helped us to enhance our project-management skills that will be very useful for us. Our individual project proposals, as one of our major requirements to finish the programme, will enable us to push ourselves to the best of our limits. This will serve as the application of what we have learned from our previous courses and information sharing. Through the project proposal, the ACE Programme allows us to practice one of the most important roles of a disaster-management leader, to be a project manager who can plan, propose and implement.

Moreover, I really liked the fact that we all get to share our best practices, knowledge, skills and experiences with one another. From the interactive and thought-provoking sessions to the simple discussions and sharing of experiences, I can say that so far this has been a great learning experience and I believe that all of it will help me in my career as a disaster-management professional. I also feel fortunate to have met friends and professionals like me who share the same passion for disaster management.

And as we continue in our ACE Programme journey for the next couple of months, we will undertake all the remaining courses of the programme. Certainly, there will be heaps of future challenges, new experiences and things to learn. I know it will not be easy, but I know that these courses will help us attain the four core competencies that we need to embody as ACE Programme graduates namely, expertise in humanitarian assistance; collaboration in humanitarian assistance; being result-oriented; and effective leadership. With the continued support and encouragement of the AHA Centre, especially the ACE Programme organisers, I know all Batch Seven participants will continue to strive to be the best. We will continue soaring high and dreaming big as a result of the positive results and outcomes of this programme. We know all our hard work and sacrifices will somehow contribute to the disaster resiliency not only of our respective countries but also for the whole of the ASEAN region.

# THE 15<sup>TH</sup> GOVERNING BOARD (GB) MEETING: NEW TEAM, SAME DETERMINATION

This year's AHA Centre Governing Board (GB) meeting was held online on 8 October 2021 and was chaired by the Singapore Civil Defense Force (SCDF). It was the first GB meeting for Mr. Lee Yam Ming as the AHA Centre's new Executive Director. The meeting discussed activities for the period of June to September 2021, as well as updates on the AHA Centre's 10th Anniversary, the agenda for which was endorsed by the GB members.

Within the reporting period, the AHA Centre facilitated the procurement of DELSA relief items to support the COVID-19 response in three ASEAN Member States namely Malaysia, Thailand and Viet Nam with funding support from Direct Relief. The relief items were valued at USD 62,000 for each Member State. Malaysia received ICT equipment for hospitals and personal protective equipment, Thailand received personal hygiene kits for infants, elderly and disabled people and Viet Nam received medical face masks and thermal scanners.

In line with ASEAN's Five-Point Consensus on Myanmar the AHA Centre, as the operational lead facilitated the first delivery of COVID-19 assistance to the Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS). This assistance was contributed by the Governments of Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand and Turkey, and Temasek Foundation International in the form of medical supplies and equipment worth USD 1.1 million. There were also cash contributions from the Philippines (USD 100,000); Singapore (USD 100,000) and Thailand (US\$ 200,000), which were utilised to procure medical supplies.

In May the concept note of the third edition of the ASEAN Risk Monitor Report and Disaster Management Review (ARMOR 3) was approved by the AHA Center Working Group. The provisional theme of ARMOR 3 is: "When disasters and pandemics collide what does it mean to us (or ASEAN), now and into the future?" In July collaborators were called for and by 25 August, the AHA Centre had received 19 abstracts submitted by various institutions and following a review process the abstracts were shortlisted. The abstracts were reviewed by the board of editors in September and the article-writing process began. It is expected that final proofreading and production will be complete in December.

On 23 June, the AHA Centre and the Palu City administration in Indonesia launched the ASEAN Village along with a book called New Homes of Opportunities that documents the lessons learned from building the ASEAN Village, with testimonies from the beneficiaries and survivors of the earthquake and tsunami disaster in 2018. Other knowledge products released during the period included four volumes of The Column, season 1 of



The 15<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Governing Board (GB) of the AHA Centre

Written by : Michael Hillary Hegarty, Moch Syifa | Photo : AHA Centre

the AHA Centre podcast and the 2025 AHA Centre work plan. The AHA Centre will work with Edelman, a consultant provided by GIZ, to broaden its communications and outreach, including social media. The AHA Centre will also conduct an assessment of internal communication and crisis communication. The result of the assessment will be used to develop a crisis communication manual.

The AHA Centre engaged in 29 events and knowledge-exchange activities as speaker, participant or moderator, it also took part in 12 training courses, in roles ranging from facilitator and provider to participant and trainer. In further regard to training, during the period Batch Seven of AHA Centre Executive (ACE) Programme was launched with 21 participants from 10 Member States and 25 training partners with a blended training arrangement involving online, webinars and if possible onsite in 2022.

Overall June to September 2021 was a busy period as the AHA Centre continued to carry out its duties in line with the One ASEAN, One Response concept.



Executive Director Mr. Lee Yam Ming presiding over the GB Meeting

# AHA CENTRE WELCOMES NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The AHA Centre welcomed its new Executive Director Mr. Lee Yam Ming on 30 August 2021. A native of Singapore, ED Lee has been in public service for 27 years.



He is an Assistant Commissioner of the Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF) and has held several leadership positions in the field of command, operations, training, policy and planning, risk management and governance, and human resources.

ED Lee is no stranger to ASEAN. He has been involved in ASEAN matters since 2004 and has represented the SCDF at various international and regional platforms. This includes the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM), the United Nations International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (UN INSARAG) and the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and ASEAN Regional Forum.

Even in conceptualising and establishing the AHA Centre, ED Lee was already very much involved. He was part of the Singapore team that negotiated, drafted and ratified foundational agreements for the ACDM, such as the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) and the ASEAN Agreement on the Establishment of the AHA Centre. He

was also involved in the drafting and adoption of the ASEAN Declaration on One ASEAN, One Response and the ASEAN 2025 Vision, and recently the AADMER Work Programme 2021 – 2025.

When asked how the AHA Centre continues to be at the forefront of disaster management and emergency response in the ASEAN region during the pandemic, he emphasised that the AHA Centre must be always ready to respond to any natural disasters in the region, even in a pandemic situation. ASEAN and the AHA Centre have grown and developed their capacities and resources over the years. ASEAN Member States have proved to be resilient and efficient in responding to several major disasters. We will continue to review and adapt our framework and response mechanisms, to ensure that we are able to meet any new challenges and evolving global and regional situations.

As the new ED, Mr. Lee envisions the AHA Centre continuing to play an important role in disaster management in the ASEAN region and beyond.

Written by : Judith Garcia Meese | Photo Credit: AHA Centre



(L-R) ED Lee Yam Ming welcomes H.E. Alex Kuprecht, President of the Swiss Council of States; H.E. Benedikt Würth, Member of the Swiss Council of States; and H.E. Kurt Kunz, Ambassador of Switzerland to Indonesia, Timor-Leste and ASEAN, to the AHA Centre in November 2021

“ASEAN and the AHA Centre must be proactive and responsive to changing environments and be innovative and transformative in approach. Closer collaboration and integration of various countries, agencies and partners in disaster management and humanitarian assistance are essential and critical in a closely connected and integrated world.”

ED Lee graduated with a good honors degree in History from the National University of Singapore. He is married with one daughter. An active sportsman in his younger days, he plays football, squash and badminton amongst many other sports. ED Lee is a big football fan and supports Liverpool. He enjoys watching movies, doing light exercise in his free time and short holidays and travelling with his family.



ED Lee presenting a special token to H.E. Alex Kurprecht, President of the Swiss Council of States.



ED Lee giving visiting officials a tour of the AHA Centre

# ONE ASEAN ONE RESPONSE



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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.