



ONE ASEAN
ONE RESPONSE

THE COLUMN

THE AHA CENTRE NEWS BULLETIN

VOL.65 | SEPTEMBER 2020



HIGHLIGHT

ASEAN Launches Project
on Standardisation and Certification
for Experts in Disaster Management

MONTHLY DISASTER OUTLOOK

Monthly Disaster
Review and Outlook for
September 2020

THE OTHER SIDE

Kajsa Sjösvärd



02 | HIGHLIGHT

The ASEAN Standards and Certification for Experts in Disaster Management (ASCEND) Project was developed from the challenge faced by National Disaster Management Organisations (NDMOs) and the AHA Centre when responding on the ground to a large-scale disaster.



05 | MONTHLY DISASTER OUTLOOK

08 | INSIGHT

10 | PARTNERSHIP

12 | AHA CENTRE DIARY



14 | THE OTHER SIDE

AHA CENTRE

ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management



GO

PAPERLESS

visit

thecolumn.ahacentre.org



EDITOR'S NOTE



Hi Readers,

We bring to you Volume 65 of The Column from the AHA Centre, once again with no shortage of updates and information from the ASEAN disaster management sector during these unforeseen times. This volume opens with an in-depth look into the ASEAN Standards and Certification for Experts in Disaster Management (ASCEND) Project launching, before an Insight article exploring the acceptance of international aid for disasters that strike during a pandemic.

Our Other Side sees an interview with the new team leader for the AHA Centre's LACER project – namely Kajsa Sjösärd from Sweden's MSB – while providing us a further insight into the AHA Centre's partnership with Germany's GIZ under the Capacities4AHAC programme currently being implemented. We also learn more about the recent webinar from the AHA Centre Executive (ACE) programme, titled ACE Webinar on Pandemics and Natural Disasters: Rethinking Humanitarian Logistics.

Please enjoy Volume 65's content, and continue to keep abreast of all ASEAN disaster management efforts.

The Editor



EDITOR IN CHIEF
 Adelina Kamal

THE EDITORIAL TEAM

MANAGING EDITOR
 Ina Rachmawati

JOURNALIST
 Andrew Mandranugraha, Aril Aditjan,
 Arnel Capili, Ferosa Arsadita,
 Gaynor Tanyang, Keith Paolo Landicho,
 Lawrence Anthony Dimailig, Ririn Dwi Haryani

EDITOR
 William Shea

CREATIVE DIRECTOR
 Yohan Andreas

GRAPHIC DESIGNER
 Fauzi Primassalam

PUBLISHED BY
 The AHA Centre

IN PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE:

ASEAN LAUNCHES PROJECT ON

STANDARDISATION AND CERTIFICATION

FOR EXPERTS IN DISASTER MANAGEMENT



The launching ceremony was conducted fully online using the ZOOM application. More than 100 participants attended the launching ceremony

The ASEAN Standards and Certification for Experts in Disaster Management (ASCEND) Project was developed from the challenge faced by National Disaster Management Organisations (NDMOs) of ASEAN Member States and the AHA Centre when responding on the ground to a large-scale disaster. In these circumstances, humanitarian actors engage from many different organisations, institutions, private companies, as well as individuals, to provide various kinds of support to those affected. While these stakeholders often hold the capacity to respond, there remained a challenge in identifying and validating their specific skills for coordination purposes.

On the 22nd September 2020, the ASCEND Project was officially launched through a joint launching ceremony, opened by the Secretary-General of ASEAN H.E. Dato Lim Jock Hoi, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to ASEAN H.E. Lim Sungnam, and the AHA Centre's Executive Director, Ms Adelina Kamal. Many ASEAN disaster management community stakeholders attended the ASCEND launching event, as well as representatives from AHA Centre donors and partners.

The ASCEND programme was developed to validate, and thus provide recognition, to specific skills and competencies held by individuals working in the disaster management sector. This certification will help the AHA Centre and ASEAN Member States to determine the skills and expertise available for both deploying or receiving support teams at times of disaster. Alongside this, competency standards can also serve as a credible reference to guide disaster management institutions and organisations when they are developing their own specific training programmes. For individuals, this certification will support their continuous learning and career progression within the disaster management sector.

From 2016-2019, led by the National Disaster Management Agency of Indonesia (BNPB) through its Competency Certification Office (LSP-PB), the first phase of the ASCEND

Written by : Andrew Mandanugraha / Ririn Dwi Haryani | Photo Credit : AHA Centre

Project developed a foundation for future efforts through the endorsement of the ASCEND Framework by the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management. As well as the ASCEND Framework's endorsement, the standard competencies for the first five disaster management professions were identified and provided. These professions are: Rapid Assessment; Humanitarian Logistics; Shelter Management; Emergency Operations Centre, and; Water, Sanitation and Hygiene.

After the completion of ASCEND phase one in early 2020, the AHA Centre received confirmation of generous support from the Republic of Korea through the ASEAN-Korea Cooperation Fund (AKCF). This support will allow for the ASCEND development to continue for the next three years. In implementing the ASCEND project, the AHA Centre will also collaborate with the Korean National Fire Agency (KNFA), where both parties will benefit through the exchange of knowledge and expertise, and activities including conducting a joint event.

The three years of ASCEND Project phase two implementation is aimed towards institutional and technical preparation. For institutions, the project will prepare relevant institutions that will implement the

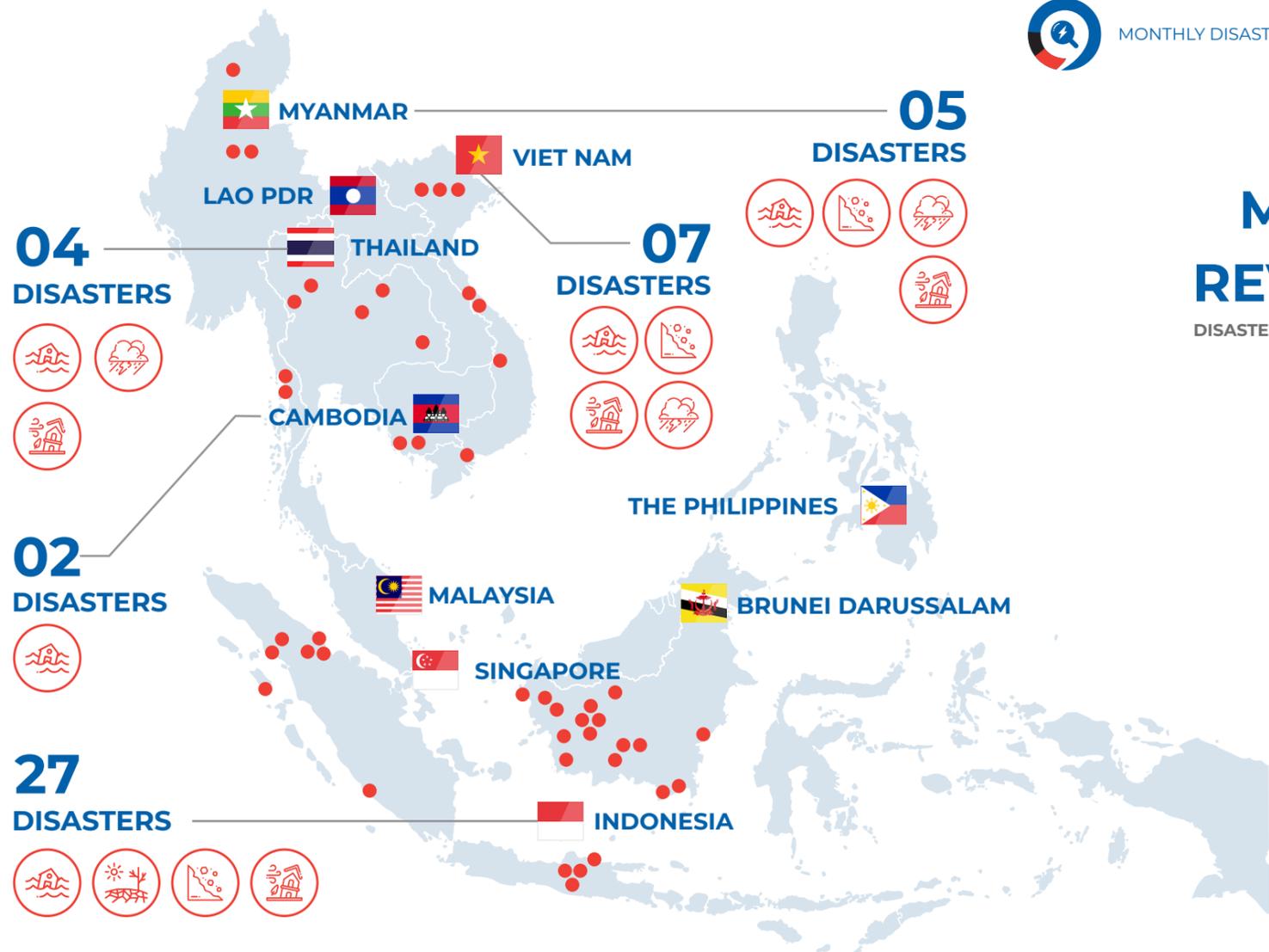
ASCEND certification process, including a Competency Body, Certifying Body and Assessment Providers. For the technical side, the project will prepare technical tools such as an ASCEND toolbox, training and certification management systems necessary to guide and document the certification process. Following the institutional and technical preparation, the project will conduct a certification assessment pilot for the first five professions, while continuing to promote and increase awareness of ASCEND throughout ASEAN target groups. This pilot activity will provide feedback for learning and iterative improvements before the ASCEND Programme is scaled-up.

This forms an exciting journey for the AHA Centre and the ASEAN Member States to ensure this initiative further contributes to the realisation of ASEAN's goal to become a global leader in disaster management by 2025, as articulated in the ASEAN Vision 2025 on Disaster Management. The AHA Centre, through the ASCEND Project, looks forward to working closely with the Republic of Korea, NDMOs, the ASEAN community, and AHA Centre partners, in enhancing regional resilience with more competent disaster management experts available in the region.



1-3 From top clockwise: the Ambassador of Republic of Korea to ASEAN, H.E. Lim Sungnam; the Secretary-General of ASEAN, H.E. Dato Lim Jock Hoi; and the Executive Director of the AHA Centre, Ms. Adelina Kamal.

You can view the full launch ceremony at: <https://youtu.be/UStS0FuXb6s>  YouTube



REGIONAL TALLY	SEPTEMBER 2020	SEPTEMBER IN FIVE-YEAR AVERAGE
• Number of recorded significant disasters	45	12
• Number of affected people	291,230	3,636,288
• Number of internally displaced people	5,300	131,495
• Number of damaged houses	59,882	26,427
• Number of casualties	25	468
• Number of injured people	122	2,203
• Number of missing people	4	281

(covering the period of Weeks 36 - 39 in 2020 and 2015-2019 average)

MONTHLY DISASTER REVIEW AND OUTLOOK

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

GENERAL REVIEW OF SEPTEMBER 2020

A total of 45 disaster events were recorded for the month of September 2020, which is 1 1/2 times higher than August 2020, and is almost four times the five-year average for September. Despite this increase, there were a range of lower numbers compared to five-year averages, including significantly less people affected, internally displaced, casualties and injuries. There were more houses damaged, however, than the average. These significant differences can be attributed to severe disaster events taking place in September 2018, including the earthquake and tsunami in Central Sulawesi, an earthquake in the Philippines, and Typhoon Mangkhut which affected the northern part of the Philippines, Malaysia, and Viet Nam. In total, said events affected about 10 million people in 2018. Additionally, 2017 saw massive droughts in Indonesia, which affected around 4 million people, and also contributes to the high five-year average figures for the month of September.

A total of 27 significant earthquakes (M≥5.0) were reported in the region for September 2020, and also ongoing volcanic activity reported for the Indonesian mountains of Anak Krakatau, Ibu, Semeru, and Dukono. While the events did not result in significant damage, they do serve as a timely reminder of the importance of geophysical hazard preparedness, particularly in tectonically active countries like Indonesia and the Philippines.

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

DISASTER COMPARISON IN NUMBERS

WHITE BAR | SEPTEMBER 2020 | RED BAR | SEPTEMBER IN FIVE-YEAR AVERAGE

Drought	2	1	Cambodia	2	0
Earthquake	0	1	Indonesia	27	5
Flood	27	4	Lao PDR	0	1
Landslide	5	1	Malaysia	0	1
Storm	4	2	Myanmar	5	0
Wind	7	3	Philippines	0	3
Total	45	12	Thailand	4	1
			Viet Nam	7	1
			Total	45	12

(covering the period of Weeks 36 - 39 in 2020 and 2015-2019 average)

SEASONAL OUTLOOK

Southwest monsoon conditions are expected to persist throughout October 2020, before gradually transitioning into the inter-monsoon period in the latter part of the month. Inter-monsoon conditions are characterised by light and variable winds, with rainy conditions expected over most of the ASEAN region. The inter-monsoon period typically lasts for about a month before the onset of Northeast Monsoon conditions, when the northern ASEAN region enters its traditional dry season, while the southern ASEAN region experiences increased rainfall.

For the October to December period, models predict above-normal rainfall over much of the Maritime Continent (south of the equator and the Philippines) and coastal regions of Viet Nam. La Niña conditions have developed over the tropical Pacific Ocean, and most climate models predict La Niña will bring wetter-than-normal conditions over the Southeast Asia region. These are expected to persist for October through to December 2020, which may cause more torrential rains and resulting flooding across many areas.

While warmer-than-normal temperatures are expected to continue over much of the Maritime Continent for the next three months, parts of Viet Nam, Laos, Cambodia and Thailand may experience below to near-normal temperatures.

For October and November, hotspot activities in the ASEAN region are expected to remain generally subdued due to rainy weather, although isolated hotspots may be detected in some areas during brief periods of drier weather. In December 2020, a gradual increase in hotspot activities may be expected in the northern ASEAN region as it enters its traditional dry season with the onset of Northeast Monsoon.

45

REPORTED DISASTERS

throughout the ASEAN region in June 2020

DISASTERS DURING A PANDEMIC: ARE COUNTRIES MORE WILLING TO ACCEPT INTERNATIONAL AID?

This month's Insight article comes from the AHA Centre's own Deputy Executive Director, Arnel Capili.

What if another major earthquake triggers a tsunami somewhere along the vast coastline of Indonesia? Or a super typhoon devastates one of the many islands of the Philippines? Would these countries, or other vulnerable nations in Southeast Asia, be more willing to accept international assistance in light of the pandemic?

Before the current pandemic, we saw a shift in some of the region's countries' policy to implement nationally-led disaster responses – with any support from the international community based on specific priorities. This was true during the Central Sulawesi earthquake in 2018, where the Government of Indonesia clearly manifested that the response was local, and that any offers of international assistance should be in-line with identified gaps, and channeled through local partners (such as the local Red Cross, local NGOs, and local government).

This tendency of governments to temper overwhelming “love and support” can be traced back from their experience of having a secondary disaster – a ‘tsunami’ of unsolicited assistance after the 2004 Banda Aceh tsunami, and super typhoon “Haiyan” (2013). The assumption is that the donations and support teams posed increased challenges for the governments of Indonesia and the Philippines, so much so that it eclipsed the well-intentioned purpose.

So then, are countries in the region more willing to accept offers of international assistance during a disaster in the middle of COVID-19 pandemic? Let us examine possible scenarios to provide some insights, and initiate conversations about how to plan responses to natural disasters in light of the pandemic.

In the short term, countries in the region will probably remain steadfast with their preference for a more nationally-led response. Understanding that most countries in the region have very strict restrictions on movement – particularly from ‘foreigners’ who are potential carriers of the virus – cash or remote technical support will be preferred. Durable goods may be accepted on the basis of diplomatic relations. For political considerations, offers from ‘friendly’ countries may be accepted to maintain good relationships, as well as in the interest of reciprocity. Regional organisations such as ASEAN may be accorded more space to reduce international humanitarian footprint.



During the Central Sulawesi earthquake in 2018, the Government of Indonesia clearly manifested that the response was local, and that any offers of international assistance should be in-line with identified gaps, and channeled through local partners.

Written by: Arnel Capili | Photo: AHA Centre

In the longer-term, and if the threat of the pandemic persists, there is a potential for countries in the region to reconsider this position. The policy shift will stem from the fact that government resources – including its frontline services – may be exhausted. With an economic downturn and the mounting pressure to support communities, governments may be more flexible to accept international assistance. Although still considered to be a national response, governments may extend greater flexibility allowing exemptions and greater access to the international humanitarian community.

Regardless, national authorities will carefully weigh-in on issues related to national capacity and domestic politics. For a country reeling from the effects of COVID-19, food and durable goods such as mobile storage units, health and hygiene kits, and the required logistics to move them will be prioritised. Planning and anticipation are key for issues surrounding entry and quarantine requirements, certifications of compliance to national standards for medical teams and their equipment, and special handling requirements for relief items (disinfecting at port of entry for example).

One thing is undeniable – disasters during this pandemic will redefine how we do things. It will challenge how we think about humanitarian action, not just during the pandemic, but also how this model of response can be adapted post-pandemic. The difficulties faced during the pandemic have shown us that there are other ways to provide support aside from being on the ground, and that being first to assist is not necessarily a priority. Rather, it is more a profound need for greater thinking of how the international humanitarian community could enhance and add greater value to a nationally-led response.



GIZ

SUPPORTING THE AHA CENTRE'S INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

The Federal Foreign Office of the Federal Republic of Germany supports the process of regional integration in the ASEAN region with capacity development aiming at strengthening the AHA Centre. It has entrusted Germany's GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH) with the implementation of its most recent project in cooperation with the AHA Centre, aimed to strengthen the capacities and work processes of the AHA Centre's corporate units by supporting institutional and capacity development efforts.

The German Federal Government had previously developed the Global Initiative on Disaster Risk Management (GIDRM), under the responsibility of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), as a network that brought together German and international disaster stakeholders from government, the private sector, academia and civil society. Its objective was to develop customised solutions to specific challenges in disaster risk management and to meet global demand by devising high-quality, innovative and sustainable approaches, with several of ASEAN Member States engaged in the pilot project.

More recently, Germany has developed a new programme with the AHA Centre focused on *Institutional Strengthening and Capacity Development (Capacities4AHAC)*, that is a stand-alone measure implemented through the agreement between the ASEAN and the Federal Republic of Germany. This regional project works alongside the AHA Centre and selected national civil protection authorities and civil society organisations, and aims to support ASEAN Member State integration and cooperation, contributing to stability, peace and security in the ASEAN region.

Written by : Ina Rachmawati | Photo : Private collection



Joint Declaration of Intent and the Implementation Agreement for the Capacities4AHAC project between the German Government and the AHA Centre were signed by the Executive Director, Ms. Adelina Kamal, and Ambassador of Germany to Indonesia, Timor Leste, and ASEAN, H.E. Dr. Peter Schoof.

To become the leading organisation for ASEAN's disaster management – including leading capacity building and becoming a knowledge and information centre – the AHA Centre needs to be equipped with strong institutional capacities and corporate units. Therefore, the project will support the AHA Centre to strengthen the capacities and work processes of the corporate units of the AHA-Centre.

The project approach incorporates various elements of capacity development, with a focus on personnel development of specialists and executives, long-term and short-term expert assignments, study tours, eLearning, and expert dialogues. Capacity development needs and instruments are identified and applied in close cooperation with the AHA Centre in order to achieve the best possible results and impacts. Through the cooperation with other relevant projects commissioned by the German Foreign Office, this project ensures synergy and a strengthening of the German contribution and its visibility in the ASEAN region.

The project implementation will be carried out in close cooperation and coordination with the AHA Centre in Jakarta, other dialogue and development partners working in ASEAN, as well as with the German Embassy in Jakarta and Foreign Office in Berlin. It will run throughout 2020 and 2021, and delivered under a budget of € 800,000 managed by GIZ.

THE PROPOSED PROJECT WILL RUN FOR TWO YEARS AND IS OFFERED WITH A BUDGET OF

€800,000



ACE WEBINAR ON PANDEMICS AND NATURAL DISASTERS:

RETHINKING HUMANITARIAN LOGISTICS

While the global pandemic has interrupted capacity building efforts such as the AHA Centre Executive (ACE) Programme, the Centre continues to provide education for ACE Programme graduates. The AHA Centre recently implemented a webinar series to support its objectives of capacity-building, networking, and utilising leadership competencies to improve national and regional coordination response mechanisms and disaster management more broadly. The webinars will run from September to November 2020, and are primarily intended to expose the ACE Programme graduates to the latest trends and challenges in disaster management.



The first webinar was conducted on 16 September 2020, in which experts and practitioners from International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot (UNHRD), the World Food Programme (WFP) and HELP Logistics shared their humanitarian logistics experiences managing humanitarian relief operations amidst COVID-19.

This pandemic has disrupted humanitarian relief operations in many ways. Restrictions limit the deployment of items and staff to the field, while global shortages of specific items (such as personal protective equipment – PPE) also hampered the supply chain at the beginning of the pandemic. Alongside this, the speed of deployment has been affected due to border closures and also shortage of commercial flights. Delays on getting tax exemptions remain a challenge as many officials work from home, reducing human resource capacity to process documentation, while some stakeholders maintain their usual ways of working in contrast with the general crisis business approaches.

All webinar speakers agreed that this pandemic has forced humanitarian actors to be agile in terms of planning and operations. This can begin with creating closer supply chain hubs, outsourcing to the private sector, and integrating efforts and coordination with manufacturers/suppliers on medical PPE. The speakers also pointed out the importance of

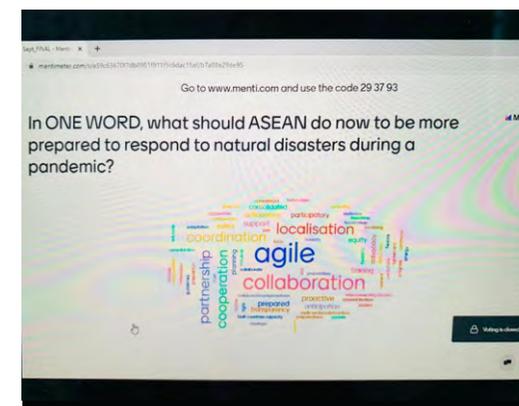
Written by: Gaynor Tanyang/ Ferosa Arsadita | Photo: AHA Centre



To facilitate interactivity, despite it being an online activity, the AHA Centre made use various tools and features, including the chat function of the ZOOM application, to allow participants to ask questions directly to the panel. The webinar also used the Mentimeter application to allow more interactivity between the panel and participants.

logistic sustainability and responsiveness, by enhancing local logistic capacity and prepositioning of commodities which are contextualised according to the population density. The use of non-in-kind assistance, for example cash, is also an option to ensure effective humanitarian assistance. Speakers and participants agreed that export-import restriction and country isolation are the most serious challenges for disaster impact that need to be addressed. In this sense, collaboration and cooperation among stakeholders is required to improve the logistic supply chain and reduce the supply competition.

The first two-hour webinar was attended by 150 participants from various sectors – with 77% of the participants having a background in disaster management and 87% having some job responsibility related to humanitarian logistic. ACE Programme graduate Ms Murni Mat Amin from the National Disaster Management Agency (NADMA) Malaysia summed up the discussion as a key step to “think strategically and act collaboratively”. The bonding between ACE Programme graduates through engagement such as this form a further opportunity to ensure an efficient flow of humanitarian logistic across the region.



If you missed this exciting webinar the recording is available in the following link

<https://youtu.be/4AZiabMk8o>





KAJSA SJÖSVÄRD

This month the AHA Centre invited Kajsa Sjösvärd – an international roster member from the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB) and disaster management professional – to provide an insight into her work in disaster management both internationally and within Sweden. Topics ranged from the current pandemic response through to leadership and the sector in general, and we bring to you some of Kajsa’s key experiences and recommendations from the wide-ranging interview.



“My focus is on how to set up a well-functioning staff function, how to optimize it and how to maintain the personnel on a good energy level, despite the stressful environment”

Kajsa has recently been appointed team leader of the MSB’s LACER project being implemented with the AHA Centre, which provides her a new experience of working in the ASEAN region, to go alongside over a decade of experience with MSB and also locally in Sweden. “I am the Director of Crisis Management and Societal Safety at the County Board of Dalarna, in Sweden, and within that capacity I often take on the role of Chief of Staff when a disaster occurs in the County. I have also been a member of MSB’s international roster for 10 years and have had several assignments in different capacities and continents.” Recently, Kajsa has also been engaged in Sweden’s pandemic response, as well as leading a response team after the devastating forest fires in Sweden during 2018.

A big part of Kajsa’s role is leadership – which sees her in charge of a range of staff during disaster responses at a local and international level. “My focus is on how to set up a well-functioning staff function, how to optimize it and how to maintain the personnel on a good energy level, despite the stressful environment” Kajsa explains. “I enjoy working with other people in teams and to set up and reach goals. It is challenging to be a part of the development process where an organisation, and foremost the persons within the organisation, are working together to reach new goals and continuously progress. I thrive being a leader in that context, to support and provide energy, but also to guide direction and find creative solutions



Kajsa Sjösvärd in the EU Civil Protection exercise in Florence, Italy 2019.



Written by : Moch Syifa and William Shree | Photo : AHA Centre

to problems.” Kajsa also highlights the important aspects of leadership in the disaster field by explaining that “it is important to be communicative, flexible, have a positive mind-set, take the initiative and make decisions when dealing with disasters”.

Kajsa also highlights the importance of positivity and leadership during long and challenging deployments, and also promotes undertaking activities to wind down when possible – with Kajsa’s preferences being running and mountain biking. She also highlights the lessons that the global pandemic has taught us in relation to disaster management, and believes it has strengthened some of the long-held beliefs of global disaster management professionals. “I believe more global cooperation, coordination and learning is needed, not less. No single state can act in isolation concerning these borderless disasters. That is why transboundary cooperation, at different levels, will remain crucial. I think that it poses a challenge, but also a great opportunity for everyone working with disasters.”

“it is important to be communicative, flexible, have a positive mind-set, take the initiative and make decisions when dealing with disasters”.

ONE ASEAN ONE RESPONSE



THE AHA CENTRE OFFICE

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



www.ahacentre.org



comm@ahacentre.org



AHA Centre



[@ahacentre](https://twitter.com/ahacentre)



[@ahacentre](https://www.instagram.com/ahacentre)

Supported by:



Japan-ASEAN Cooperation



ONE ASEAN
ONE RESPONSE

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.