VOLUME 15, ISSUE 2, 2023

LIAISON

A JOURNAL OF CIVIL-MILITARY DISASTER MANAGEMENT & HUMANITARIAN RELIEF COLLABORATIONS

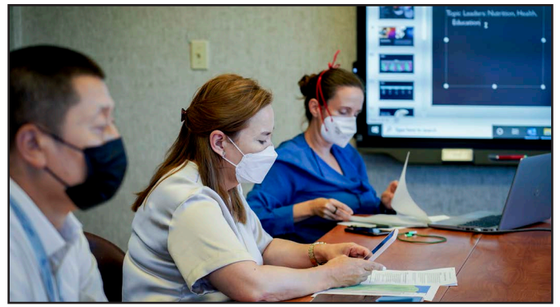
Looking Back, Looking Forward

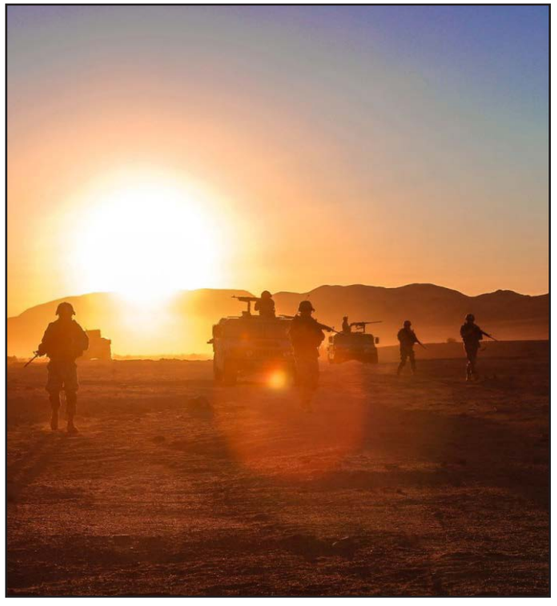
The Importance of Localization during Crises

A History of Foreign Disaster Response

Empowering Resilience in Vulnerable Populations

CONTENTS





ON THE COVER Photo illustration by Rufino E. Ballesteros

IN EVERY ISSUE

Two Soldiers from 10th Special Forces Group Airborne look out over the desert of the National Training Center on Fort Irwin, CA, Aug. 17, 2021. The National Training Center on Fort Irwin simulates what it would be like to be deployed to better prepare soldiers for changing climates and environments.

Image by U.S. Army SPC. Steven Alger

LIAISON

VOLUME 15, ISSUE 2, 2022

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LIAISON is a publication of the Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (CFE-DM) and serves to inform its diverse audience of current and emerging issues related to civil-military relations across the broad spectrum of disaster relief in order to enhance understanding among civilian and military practitioners and policy makers.

Content is prepared in accordance with the *Associated Press Style Guide*. Contributions are welcomed and highly encouraged. The editor reserves the right to make editorial changes to any material submitted as deemed necessary.

The authors in this issue of LIAISON *are entirely responsible for opinions expressed in their articles. These opinions are not to be construed as official views of, or endorsed by, CFE-DM, any of its partners, the Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government.*

In addition to the Liaison staff and contributing authors, the editor thanks the following people whose efforts made the publication possible: Joseph Martin, Doug Wallace, James Kenwolf, Rochelle Naeole-Adams, Beth Gerry, Rod Macalintal, Alice Tsai, Joshua Szimonisz, Trevor Monroe, Lloyd Puckett, Ranya Ghadban, Amy Gorey, Gregg St. Pierre, Casey Johnson, Stephanie Liu, Clyde Louchez, Andrea Ciletti, Victoria Hart, Alberto Morales, Leigh Sholler, Ralph Mamiya, and Jenney Pantenburg.

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

This year the Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance celebrates its 30th anniversary. For three decades, we've been steadfast in our commitment to build partnerships to fortify disaster response capabilities and alleviate human suffering in the face of disasters in the Indo-Pacific.

The landscape of Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Response (HADR) has undergone profound changes during these years. At CFE-DM, we are continually learning and adapting our research, training, and civil-military coordination efforts to meet evolving challenges. There's a shift toward empowering local communities, recognizing their knowledge, and involving them in decision-making processes. This trend emphasizes resilience-building and sustainable recovery. There's an increasing emphasis on multi-stakeholder collaboration involving governments, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO), private sectors, and local communities to optimize resources, share expertise, and coordinate efforts effectively. As the frequency and intensity of natural disasters rise due to climate change, there's a growing focus on integrating climate adaptation strategies into response plans and long-term development initiatives.

In this edition of the Liaison Journal, we explore the key achievements of the HADR community in the Indo-Pacific over the past 30 years, the evolution of civil-military coordination, and ways in which governments, militaries, local communities, and NGOs collaborate to pursue overarching objectives for present and future needs.

In "A Look Back at a History of Disasters," CFE researchers Aoki and Ciletti take us through USINDOPACOM's Foreign Disaster Response Support in the Indo-Pacific, over the last 30 years. In her article, "You Can't Just Send Emails during a Crisis!" Sholler reiterates the imperative need for localization in disaster preparedness and response. In "Empowering Resilience," Tanaka shares a success story of an NGO applying a localization approach to the Venezuelan refugee crisis in Peru.

In addition to these articles, we also commemorate this occasion by sharing some unique aspects of the Center through visual narratives. As we celebrate our achievements, this milestone is also a poignant reminder of the continued dedication needed to address the dynamic challenges ahead. Together, we reaffirm our commitment to saving lives, mitigating suffering, and shaping a more resilient future.

Aloha,

CONTRIBUTORS

Alan Aoki

Alan Aoki works in the Applied Research and Information Sharing (ARIS) Branch of the Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (CFE-DM) and is an employee of Valiant Integrated Services. He serves as a Research Analyst to the Center. Alan joined CFE-DM shortly after graduating from the University of Hawaii at Manoa and is grateful to have been with the Center for many years. He is fortunate to be a part of CFE-DMs 30th anniversary celebration and enjoyed co-writing an article with his ARIS colleague Andrea Ciletti for this issue. **See article, page 64.**

Andrea Ciletti

Andrea Ciletti joined the Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (CFE-DM) as a research analyst in 2015. In her eight years at CFE-DM, her research and writing has focused on disaster risk and vulnerabilities of countries in the Indo-Pacific Region. Beyond her research role, she has supported various civil-military engagements, exercises, and partner nation capacity building in Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, Australia, and New Zealand. Andrea's background in technical report writing and program management has supported multiple DoD contracts. She served as a Technical Editor for AECOM's Comprehensive Long-Term Environmental Action Navy contract, and as a Technical Writer for CSC's Defense Information Systems-Pacific contract where she developed civil-military communication materials. She brings with her eleven years teaching as a faculty member for the University of Phoenix ground campuses in Hawaii and also served as Lead Faculty Area Chair for the College of General Studies. Andrea holds a B.A. in English from Syracuse University, and a M.A. in Communication from Hawaii Pacific University. **See article, page 64.**

Leigh Sholler

Leigh Sholler is an employee of Valiant Integrated Services. She serves as a Research Analyst in the Applied Research and Information Sharing (ARIS) Branch at the Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (CFE-DM). Her portfolio includes planning, writing, and developing information products focused on disaster management policy and practice for U.S. military and civilian personnel and for 36 partner nations in the Indo-Pacific region. **See article, page 80.**

Hiroto Tanaka

Hiroto Tanaka serves as the CEO of the Japan-based NGO, Japan Agency for Development and Emergency (JADE). He has more than thirty years of experience in humanitarian aid and development assistance working with the UN, Japanese government, and non-profit organizations. He has participated in responses to major conflict and natural disasters around the world: Rwanda (1994), Kosovo (1999), East Timor (1999), Afghanistan (2001), Indian Ocean tsunami (2004), Pakistan Kashmir earthquake (2005), DR Congo Peace-building (2008), Sri Lankan Civil War (2009), Gaza–Israel conflict (2014), Rohingya refugees (2017), etc. Lately, he has worked for humanitarian assistance in the ongoing Russia-Ukraine War and the Venezuelan migration Crisis in Peru. His expertise is post-conflict peacebuilding and reconstruction with special focus on the role of community development for durable peace. He also has extensive experience in Civil-Military Cooperation. Hiroto holds a B.A. degree in political science From Chuo University and a M.A. in Development Studies from SOAS, University of London. He was a DKI APCSS Fellow of the Comprehensive Crisis Management (CCM-19) in 2019. **See article, page 50.**

LIAISON welcomes article submissions

LIAISON provides an open forum for stimulating discussion, exchange of ideas and lessons learned – both academic and pragmatic– and invites active participation from its readers.

If you would like to address issues relevant to the disaster management and humanitarian assistance community, or share comments or thoughts on articles from past issues, please submit them to: cfe.dmha.fct@pacom.mil

LIAISON reserves the right to edit submissions for clarity, language, and accuracy.

Format - Email submissions in an unformatted Microsoft Word file. Footnotes are the preferred method of citation, if applicable. Email images separate from the word document as JPG files.

Provide original research - We prefer original submissions, but if your article or paper is being considered for publication elsewhere, please note that with the submission. Previously published articles will be considered if they are relevant to the issue topic.

Copyrights or licenses - All work remains the property of the author or photographer. Submission of an article or photograph to LIAISON magazine implies authorization to publish with proper attribution.

Supporting imagery - Original imagery supporting any and all articles is welcome. Ensure the images are high-resolution and can be credited to the photographer without license infringement. Images should be attached to the submission separately, not embedded within the Microsoft Word document.

Biography and photo - When submitting an article, include a short biography and high-resolution photo of yourself for the contributor's section.

Clarity and scope - Avoid technical acronyms and language. The majority of LIAISON readers are from the Asia-Pacific nations and articles should be addressed to an international audience. Articles should also be applicable to partners in organizations or nations beyond that of the author. The aim is for successful cases to aid other partners of the disaster management and humanitarian community.

Email articles to: cfe.dmha.fct@pacom.mil

CONGRATULATORY LETTERS
FROM PARTNERS AND ALLIES

Commander
U.S. Indo-Pacific Command

October 27, 2023

On behalf of the men and women of the United States Indo-Pacific Command, thank you and congratulations on thirty years of hard work – Well Done! The Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance efforts are directly tied to preservation of life in the region and are critical to our shared mission to increase security, foster collaboration, and strengthen relationships with our allies and partners.

Our vast region faces many unique challenges which you have uniquely addressed over 3 decades. Establishment of the USINDOPACOM Climate Change Impacts Program in 2021 to address one of the top concerns of Pacific nations has faithfully led and provided unparalleled value through research and actionable results. Your work enables our nation and other nations' capabilities to respond and prepare for natural disasters and complex emergencies. Your efforts have lasting impacts and profoundly contributed to the security and stability of the Indo-Pacific.

Once again, congratulations on reaching this thirty-year milestone and thank you for your unwavering commitment.

Sincerely,

J. C. AQUILINO
Admiral, U.S. Navy

PDC | GLOBAL

The SASAKAWA AWARD UNDRR 2022 WINNER

Better solutions.
Fewer disasters.
Safer world.

October 23, 2023

The Center for Excellence in Disaster Management
and Humanitarian Assistance (CFE-DM)
456 Hornet Avenue, Building 76
Ford Island, HI 96818

Celebrating 30 Years

of CFE-DM's Global Humanitarian Achievements

On behalf of the PDC ʻohana we extend our heartfelt congratulations to the Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (CFE-DM) as you celebrate an incredible milestone—30 years of dedicated service. This remarkable achievement is a testament to the unwavering commitment, expertise, and relentless pursuit of excellence that have defined your journey.

CFE-DM has consistently proven itself as a leader, helping to set standards for best practices and inspiring others to work collectively to strengthen disaster management capabilities. Your success is a reflection of the dedication, passion, and determination of its team members, past and present. We would like to express our gratitude to each and every one of you for your hard work and unyielding commitment to the mission of disaster management.

As we look back on the last 30 years, let us also look forward to the future as PDC and CFE-DM continue our partnership with innovative solutions to address the next phase of disaster management challenges. Together we are tackling new and emerging threats by working together to build a #saferworld.

On this special occasion, we want to commend CFE-DM for the extraordinary achievements and express my support for your ongoing work. May your organization continue to be a vital element of our global communities' efforts toward addressing the challenge of building resilience.

Once again, congratulations on 30 years of outstanding service in disaster management. Here's to many more decades of success!

Sincerely,

Ray Shirkhodai
Executive Director

University of Hawai'i
Pacific Disaster Center

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DANIEL K. INOUYE INSTITUTE

November 1, 2023

The Daniel K. Inouye Institute proudly extends a heartfelt congratulations on the 30th anniversary of the Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance.

It began as a simple idea, following Hurricane Iniki's devastation of the Island of Kauai in 1992. Senator Inouye saw the value of a coordinated disaster and humanitarian assistance program for island communities, and more broadly, island nations for the Indo-Pacific region.

It was a small item in the Defense budget and inhabited a small office on the Tripler Army Medical Center campus. Military leaders 30 years ago did not know exactly what to make of the COE, let alone its value. As with many initiatives the Senator championed, he could see a mission, a requirement ten years into the future. The COE was one of the very early "soft power" tools in then PACOM's tool kit.

Over the years, there have been an increasing number of natural and man-made disasters. The United States is inundated with requests for assistance at home or overseas. Climate change has further exacerbated and increased the intensity so much so that it is fast becoming a global security risk. The work of the COE could not be more critical today with an increased demand and expanding mission.

Keep up the good work and here's to another decade of outstanding service.

DANIEL K. INOUYE INSTITUTE FUND

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www.danielkinouyeinstitute.org

EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
BANGKOK

THE AMBASSADOR

12 October 2023

Mr. Joseph Martin
Director
Center for Excellence in Disaster Management & Humanitarian Assistance (CFE-DM)
Honolulu, Hawaii

Dear Director Martin:

On your 30th anniversary, U.S. Embassy Bangkok extends our heartfelt congratulations to the Center for Excellence in Disaster Management & Humanitarian Assistance. CFE-DM's three decades of providing education, fostering collaboration, and strengthening relationships to save lives and alleviate human suffering are commendable and worth celebrating.

CFE-DM has been a welcome addition to the Mission Thailand team over the last two years, furthering our country strategy by building Thailand's disaster response capacity and that of partners around the region. U.S. Embassy Bangkok is grateful for this partnership and all of CFE-DM's excellent work.

Thank you for all that you do and, again, congratulations on this important milestone. All of us at Embassy Bangkok look forward to expanding our cooperation in the years ahead.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

Robert F. Godec
Ambassador

DANIEL K. INOUYE
ASIA-PACIFIC CENTER FOR SECURITY STUDIES
2058 MALUHIA ROAD
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96815-1949

November 9, 2023

To the Center for Excellence in Disaster Management & Humanitarian Assistance
456 Hornet Avenue
Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii
96860-3503

Aloha and Hafa Adai Joe Martin and CFE Ohana,

On behalf of the Daniel K. Inouye Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies (DKI APCSS) Ohana, we extend our sincerest congratulations to the Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance on its 30th anniversary.

Like DKI APCSS, CFE-DM embraces the vision and passion of the late Hawaii Senator, Daniel K. Inouye. A military veteran, Medal of Honor and Presidential Medal of Freedom recipient, Senator Inouye spent decades in Congress working to build a stronger, more robust Pacific community. Three decades after CFE-DM's establishment, we witness his legacy in your tremendous accomplishments that have strengthened partnerships across the Indo-Pacific and beyond while building a more resilient region.

Though our specific collaboration on research, training, or educational initiatives to enhance the capabilities of military and civilian leaders has varied over time, our mutual interest in living Ike Pono and in responding to complex emergencies by strengthening and preparing the region remains steadfast. We are proud to continue along this path of collaboration and partnership to provide education and training to our allies and partners.

DKI APCSS commends you on your 30 years of working toward a more stable, secure, and prosperous Indo-Pacific region. We wish you continued success in the future and send congratulations on this momentous occasion.

With much aloha and very respectfully,
Pete

PETER A. GUMATAOTAO
Rear Admiral
U.S. Navy (Retired)
Director

Congrats Joe & team CFE! We are very proud of your accomplishments. BZ!!

Shared Gifts

Tokens of Connection and Collaboration

At CFE-DM's headquarters on Ford Island, Hawai'i, connections have flourished as various delegations converged here over the past 30 years. Our engagements here, and across the Indo-Pacific and beyond, often result in meaningful exchanges, sometimes in the form of gifts.

Here, we showcase a selection of cherished tokens from our partners and allies. These gifts, displayed in a glass case in the Center's courtyard, stand as symbols of our enduring friendships.

Each item tells a story of mutual respect and collaboration. These artifacts not only decorate our space, but also signify the bonds created through goodwill and shared ambitions.

1. Teacup from Royal Thai Armed Forces
2. Model ship from Republic of Korea Joint Forces Military University
3. Small sword in sheath from Wooden carving from Singapore Changi Regional HADR Coordination Centre (RHCC)
4. Wooden sculpture from the Ministry of Health and Population, Nepal
5. Decorative plate from Japan
6. Drum from ICRC Palau
7. Plaque from Allied Joint Force Command Naples, Italy
8. Sculpture from Nepal
9. Model ship from the Secretariat of The Addu City Council, Maldives

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FOREWORD

The Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (CFE-DM), established in 1994, has been instrumental in boosting crisis response capabilities and fostering collaboration among U.S. and partner militaries before, during, and after natural disasters and complex emergencies.

The center has embraced new initiatives like the Protection of Civilians (POC) and Climate Change Impacts (CCI) programs. POC aims to safeguard civilians during military operations, aligning with the U.S. Department of Defense's (DOD) Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response Action Plan. It emphasizes the importance of safeguarding civilians, especially in conflict zones, and stresses the necessity of coordinated efforts between humanitarian and military actors. CCI focuses on climate change's security implications, addressing issues like sea-level rise and regional security concerns.

CFE-DM's engagements extend globally, collaborating with organizations like the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA).

As warfare dynamics evolve with urbanization and deliberate targeting of civilians, protecting civilians and addressing the impacts of climate change rose to be pivotal challenges. The center acknowledges these complexities, and works to integrate these concerns into humanitarian assistance and disaster response planning and execution.

CFE-DM, now at its 30th anniversary, continues to evolve, adapting to emerging DOD and regional requirements. Its commitment to training, research, and collaboration underscores its relevance in enhancing civil-military response capabilities amidst evolving global challenges. As we continue to work toward meeting new challenges, understanding past challenges and accomplishments is imperative.

The images and their accompanying captions tell a story not only about the last 30 years of the Center, but of the humanitarian landscape as a whole, from the perspective of a DoD agency.

"TRAIN TOGETHER TO WORK TOGETHER"

-CFE-DM original motto

1994

Congressional legislation established the Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance to provide and facilitate education, training, and research in civil-military operations to enhance interagency coordination in international disaster management response efforts and to advance Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Response capability. Through the guidance and dedication of Senator Daniel K. Inouye, CFE-DM was written into U.S. Code Title 10 and opened in October 1994 at Tripler Army Medical Center.

DoD/807th MEDICAL COMMAND

1996

The Combined Humanitarian Assistance Response Training (CHART) course is created to provide disaster response personnel with instruction on civilian-military relations in disaster environments, including interacting with agencies of the affected state and humanitarian agencies.

Operation Provide Comfort

1990's -- Airmen and Kurdish refugees unload food supplies from a CH-53E Super Stallion helicopter during Operation Provide Comfort, an Allied effort to aid the refugees who fled the forces of Saddam Hussein in Northern Iraq. DOD

"Again it was our Soldiers' unique blend of military and civilian expertise which started electricity and water running in Kuwait and fed and sheltered the Kurdish refugees."

— Maj. Gen. Roger W. Sandler, 27th Chief of Army Reserve, former commanding general, U.S. Army Reserve Command

Kurdish refugee children and an old man help U.S. military personnel dislodge a light vehicle from a rut. The U.S. forces were in the region as part of Operation Provide Comfort, an Allied effort to aid the refugees who fled the forces of Saddam Hussein in northern Iraq DOD/April Hatton

1998

CFE-DM is authorized by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to facilitate the Health Emergencies in Large Populations (H.E.L.P.) course. In 2023, ICRC's Headquarters curtailed the global coordination of the H.E.L.P. course and, given the Center's changes in mission priorities, CFE-DM will transition the H.E.L.P. course to the National Center for Disaster Medicine and Public Health (NCDMPH) at Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, part of the U.S. Department of Defense, in 2024.

H.E.L.P. course attendees participate in a practical exercise Sept. 12, 2019, at the Hale Koa Hotel in Honolulu, Hawaii. H.E.L.P. is hosted by CFE-DM in collaboration with ICRC and the University of Hawai'i Office of Public Health Studies. The training is designed to provide participants with an understanding of the major public health issues and decision-making skills necessary to effectively plan for and respond to the needs of populations affected by humanitarian crises. DOD/Theanne Herrmann

CFE-DM Director Joseph Martin alongside H.E.L.P Course Coordinator from the ICRC, Val Belchoir-Bellino, Aug. 19, 2022. Twenty-nine participants from 15 nations gathered at the East-West Center at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa to participate in the two-week course. DOD/Aiyana Paschal

1999

CFE-DM helps facilitate a security workshop with the international NGO World Vision and U.S. Marine Forces Pacific, the first collaborative training effort between World Vision and the U.S. military.

1993 - U.S. Marine Gunnery Sgt. Charles Restifo, 1st Combat Engineers, 1st Marine Expeditionary Force, hands a sack of grain to a Somali woman holding a baby. After food-for-guns exchanges were completed, grain was handed out to women and old men in an effort to win over the people of Mogadishu. This mission was in direct support of Operation Restore Hope. Operation Restore Hope was the U.S. contribution to the United Nations Operation in Somalia II (UNOSOM II), a multinational force nation building mission. The more than 22,000 troops from over 27 nations became known as the United Task Force (UNITAF). UNOSOM II received criticism from academics and humanitarian organizations, pointing to a need for greater transparency and accountability during multinational missions in foreign countries. USAF/Tsgt Perry Heimer

Late 1999

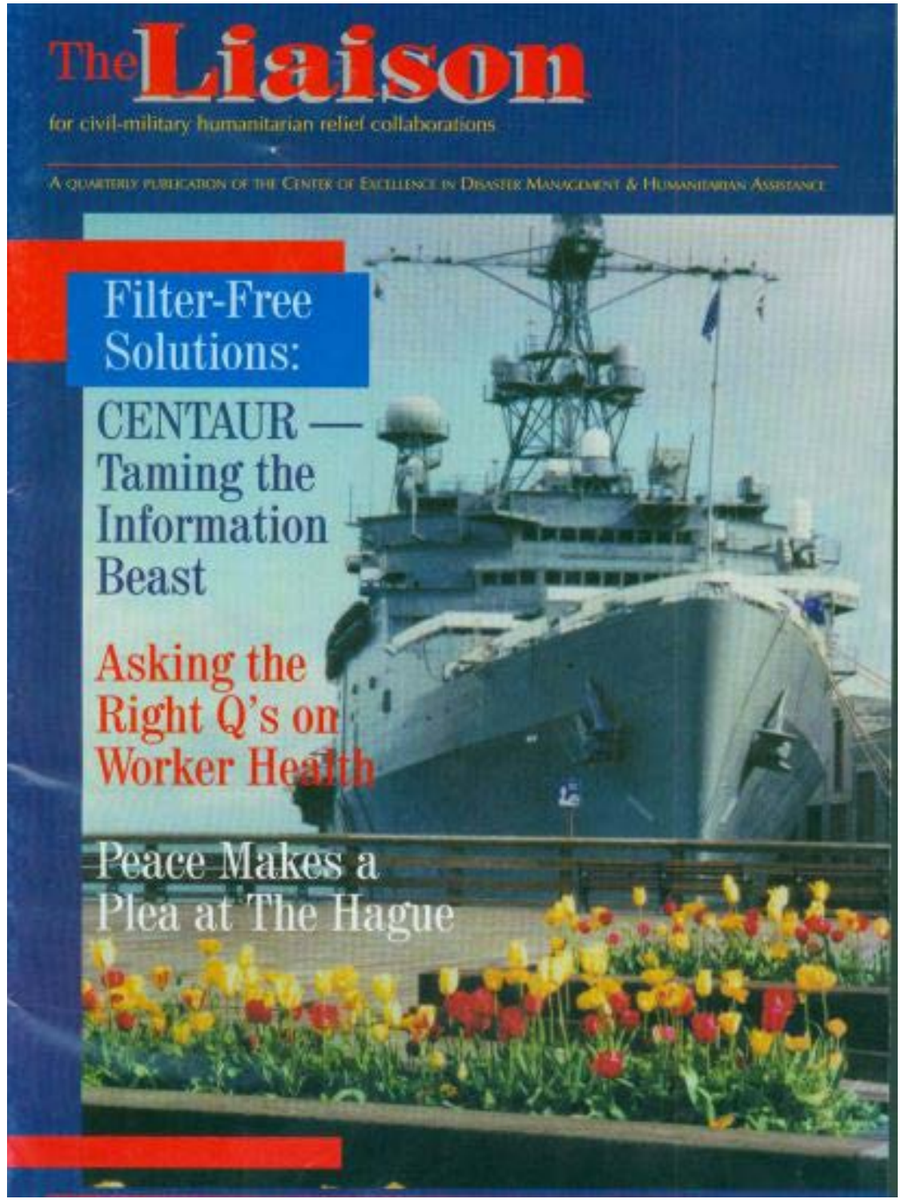
The first handbook, known as the 'CFE Primer on East Timor,' is given to President Bill Clinton on the tarmac at Hickam Air Force Base.

President William J. Clinton's arrival at Hickam Air Force Base in Honolulu, Hawai'i. President Clinton is pictured shaking hands with a little girl in the crowd.

Ralph Alswang

1999

The first issue of Liaison Magazine is published.



The second issue, published in 1999. All issues, past and present, are available on the CFE-DM website: https://www.cfe-dmha.org/Liaison

2000

The Center, in coordination with the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations, led a series of peacekeeping workshops, which contributed to the creation of the Department of State Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI) in 2005. The images here feature an annual multinational peacekeeping exercise that is a result of the GPOI.

Nepalese peacekeepers conduct convoy operations, instructed by U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. Thomas Dewar, 3rd Law Enforcement Battalion, during Khaan Quest 2018 (KQ18) at Five Hills Training Area, June 20, 2018. KQ18 is a multinational training exercise designed to strengthen the capabilities of the U.S., Mongolia, and other partner nations in international peace support operations. USA/Staff Sgt. Balinda O'Neal Dresel

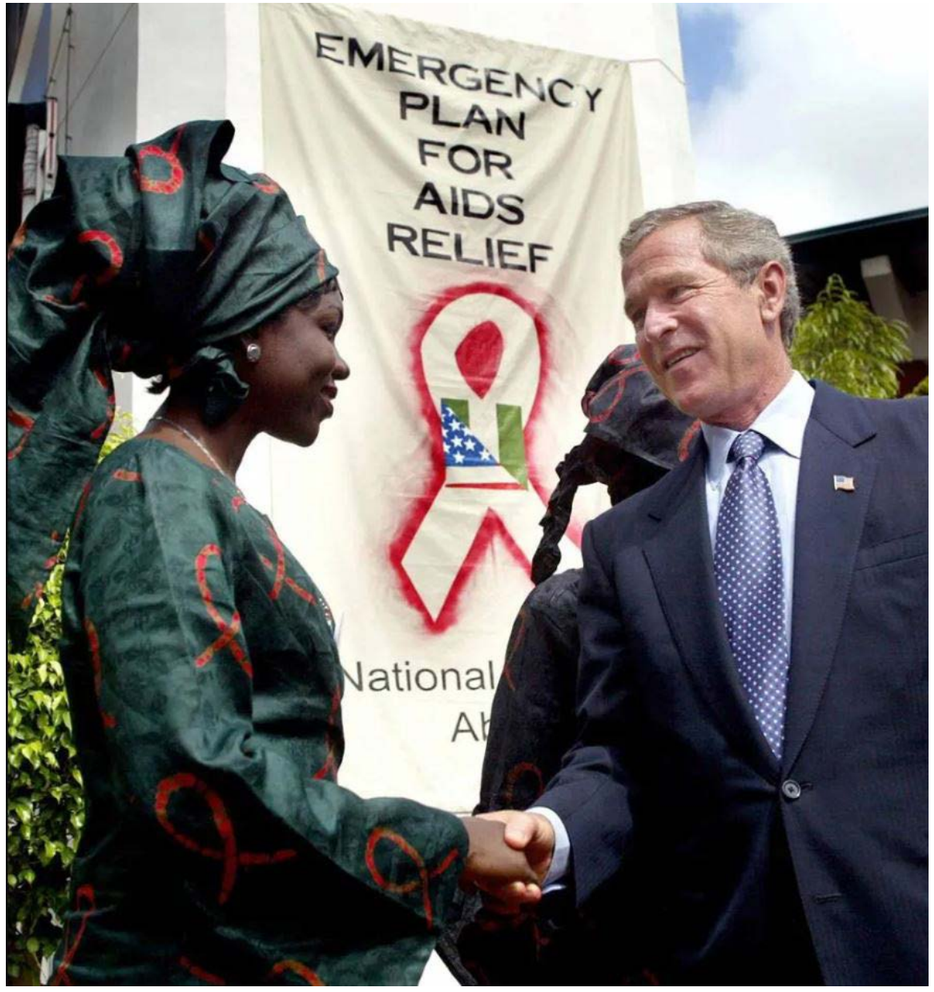
Members of the Mongolian Military Music and Dance Academic Ensemble perform traditional dances during the Mongolian culture night at Exercise Khaan Quest in Five Hills Training Area, Mongolia, August 4, 2013. Khaan Quest is an annual multinational exercise sponsored by the U.S. and Mongolia, and it is designed to strengthen the capabilities of the U.S., Mongolia, and other partner nations in international peace support operations. USMC/ Sgt John M. Ewald

2001

CFE-DM becomes a direct reporting unit to U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, then, U.S. Pacific Command (USPACOM), streamlining efforts for increased civil-military coordination in the Asia Pacific, while continuing to receive program direction and policy guidance from the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations/Low-Intensity Conflict.

U.S. Airmen and Marines unload relief supplies from a CH-53E Super Stallion helicopter assigned to Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron (HMM) 265 in Padang, West Sumatra, Indonesia, Oct. 9, 2009. The supplies were delivered after two earthquakes ravaged the region. The U.S. Navy's Amphibious Force 7th Fleet directed the U.S. military response to a request from the Indonesian government for assistance and support for humanitarian efforts. USN/MC2 Byron C. Linder

U.S. Marines prepare to offload supplies from a CH-53E from the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) Special Operations Capable (SOC), while waiting on the members of a U.S. Navy medical team in Bamna, Bangladesh. The amphibious assault ship USS Kearsarge (LHD 3) and the embarked elements of the 22nd MEU SOC arrived off the coast of Bangladesh, Nov. 23, 2007, to support ongoing relief efforts at the request of the Bangladesh government. USMC/MSgt Ezekiel Kitandwe



U.S. President George W. Bush in Abuja, Nigeria. AFP/ Tim Sloan

2002

The Center is tasked to assist in the development and execution of the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief initiative through presidential funding.

2004 – 2005

Director Gerard "Pete" Bradford III served as the Joint Interagency Coordination Group commander during then USPACOM's disaster response operations after the devastating Indian Ocean Tsunami. Additionally, CFE-DM staff played a significant supporting role to USPACOM in the planning and execution of Operation Unified Assistance

Airman 1st Class Emily Starcher helps Sri Lankan relief workers unload vegetables from an HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopter during an Operation Unified Assistance mission. She was a flight engineer assigned to the 33rd Rescue Squadron at Kadena Air Base, Japan. The Kadena Airmen helped bring food, medicine and supplies to people affected by the Tsunami that struck South East Asia, Dec. 26, 2004. USAF/Master Sgt. Val Gempis

Aviation Machinist's Mate Airman Carlos Martinez directs an MH-60S Knighthawk helicopter to drop a cargo net full of relief supplies on the flight deck aboard USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72) during a night vertical replenishment with a nearby supply ship. Helicopters assigned to Carrier Air Wing Two (CVW-2) and Sailors from Abraham Lincoln supported Operation Unified Assistance, the humanitarian operation effort in the wake of the Tsunami that struck South East Asia. USN/PH3 Bernardo Fulle

Indonesians from the village of Tjalang, Sumatra, Indonesia, rush towards a SH-60 Seahawk helicopter, assigned to Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron 2, as the helicopter touches down to drop off food supplies, Jan. 8, 2005. USN/ Philip A McDaniel

2005

CFE-DMHA staff seconded as Civil-Military Coordination (CMCOORD) officer in response to South Asia earthquake in Pakistan.

Pakistani soldiers unload relief supplies from an MH-53 Sea Stallion helicopter from Helicopter Mine Countermeasure Squadron 15 (HM-15) in a remote village of Northern Pakistan. The U.S. government participated in a multinational humanitarian assistance and support effort led by the Pakistani government to bring aid to victims of the devastating earthquake that struck the region Oct 8 2005. USN/PH2 Timothy Smith

(Top image on next page) Bilalawan Abdunkarim, 15, stands amongst the rubble that was his house at Muzaffarabad, Pakistan, Nov. 7, 2005. The house was destroyed during the devastating earthquake that struck the region Oct. 8, 2005. USA/ Barry Loo

(Right Image) U.S. Army Sgt. Kornelia Rachwal gives a drink of water to a young Pakistani girl being flown from Muzaffarabad to Islamabad, Pakistan, aboard a U.S. Army CH-47 "Chinhook" helicopter, Oct. 19, 2005. The United States government participated in a multinational humanitarian assistance and support effort led by the Pakistani Government to bring aid to victims of the devastating earthquake that struck the region Oct. 8 2005. USAF/ Tech. Sgt. Mike Buytas

2007

Inaugural Pandemic Influenza workshops and symposiums launched in collaboration with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the United Nations World Health Organization (WHO).

Midshipman 3rd Class Abigail Pidgeon receives a vaccine. As the undergraduate college of our country's naval service, the Naval Academy prepares young men and women to become professional officers of competence, character, and compassion in the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps. USN/ MC2 Nathan Burke

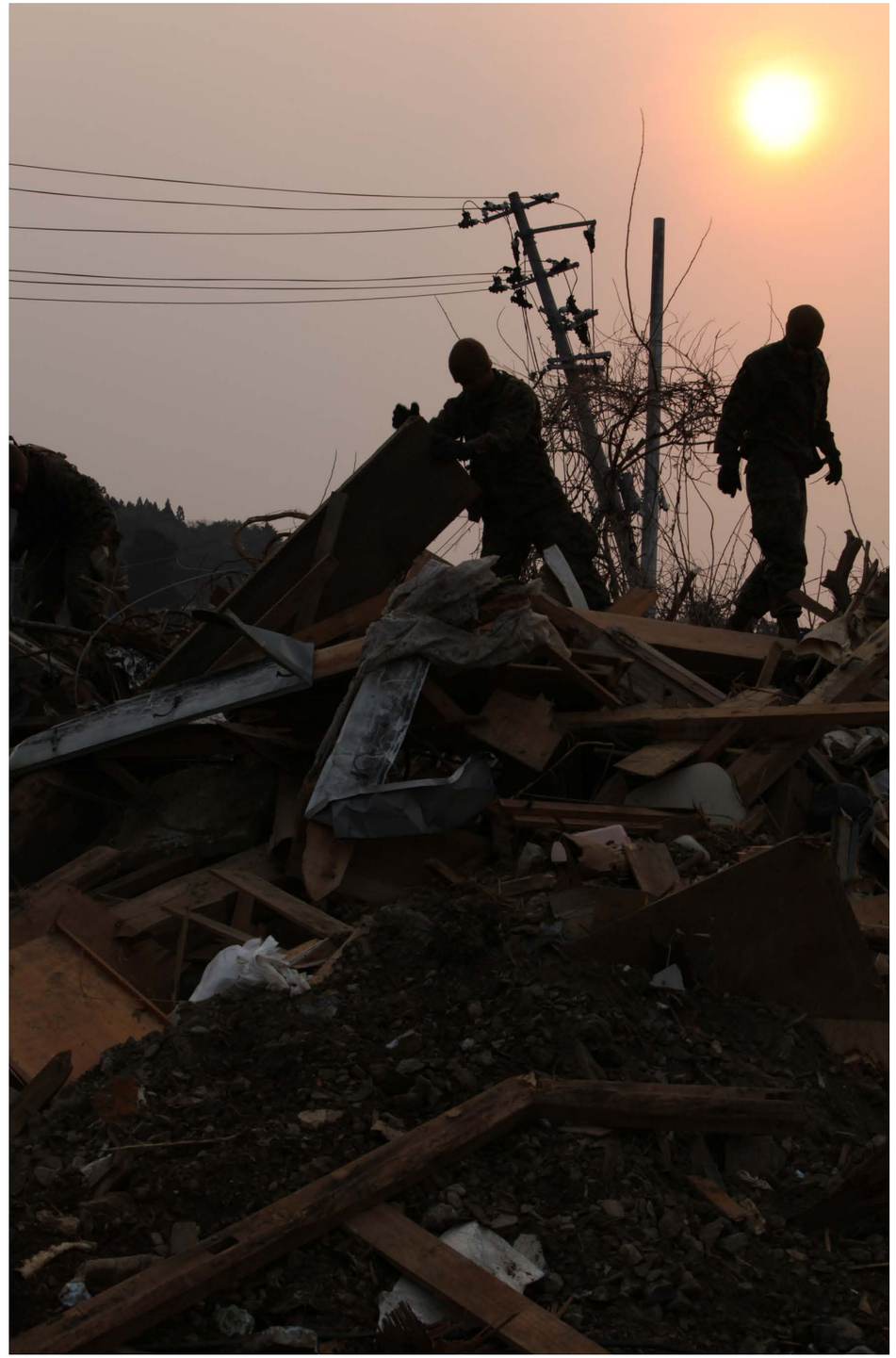
2010

The CHART course transitions to the HART course, which continues to provide U.S. military service members with civil-military coordination training worldwide.

U.S. Navy Lt. Glen Roberts works with Armed Forces Medical Institute Col. Saydur Rahman, M.D., for the Bangladesh Army, during a practical exercise as a part of a four-day HART course at CFE-DM. The HART course prepares U.S. military commanders and partners to respond more effectively during civilian-led humanitarian assistance and foreign disaster response missions. DOD/ Theanne Herrmann

2011

CFE-DM staff travel to Japan in support of Operation Tomodachi following the Tōhoku earthquake and tsunami, which caused severe damage to the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station and resulted in the release of radiation into the environment.



April 2, 2011, U.S. Marines with 2nd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, Battalion Landing Team (BLT), 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), pick up debris during a HADR mission at Uranohama Port, Oshima Island, Japan, in support of Operation Tomodachi. The 31st MEU's involvement was part of a larger U.S. government response, after a 9.0 earthquake and subsequent tsunami struck Japan, causing widespread damage. The 31st MEU is ready to support our Japanese partners and to provide assistance when called upon. USMC/ Lance Cpl. Brennan O'Lowney

2013

After nearly 19 years at Tripler Army Medical Center, CFE-DM finds a new home in the historic Building 76 on Ford Island in the heart of Pearl Harbor.

Images depict CFE-DM's ribbon cutting ceremony held at historic Building 76. Building 76 served as a dispensary during WWII. Personnel wounded during the bobming of Pearl Harbor were treated at the facility. DOD photo

2013

The Center entered into letters of understanding with Columbia University's National Disaster Preparedness Training Center, the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies, Pacific Disaster Center, and the University of Hawai'i and established its Academic Partnership Program.

Colleagues from the Association of Pacific Rim Universities (APRU), PDC Global, and University of Hawai'i at Mānoa join CFE-DM staff at the Center to discuss important new Disaster Risk Reduction initiatives to enhance collaboration across organizations, Feb. 2023. DOD/Aiyana Paschal

2013

After Typhoon Haiyan ravished the Philippines, CFE-DM staff members traveled to the country to record the international disaster response efforts for part of an information gathering mission to then analyze and provide lessons learned and best practices.

Armed Forces of the Philippines members, along with U.S. Marines and sailors, police officers, and volunteers offload relief supplies from an MV-22B Osprey assigned to Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 265, deployed with 3D Marine Expeditionary Brigade, in support of Joint Task Force 505, at Guiuan Airfield, Philippines, Nov. 21, 2013, during Operation Damayan. USMC/ Lance Cpl. Caleb Hoover

2014

- The Center launched its new website: www.cfe-dmha.org

- Col. Joseph Martin takes over as director of CFE-DMHA. Martin joins the team from then, USPACOM, where he most recently served as director for Pacific Outreach Directorate.

- Regional Consultative Group, formed in 2014, focuses on improving civil-military coordination during disaster response for five countries identified as most likely to be hit by a megadisaster: Bangladesh, Indonesia, Myanmar, Nepal, and the Philippines. CFE-DM, UNOCHA, and Australian Civil-Military Centre (ACMC) (joined in 2018) act as co-secretariats of the multi-stakeholder, regional forum that brings together humanitarian, civilian, and military actors to improve humanitarian civil-military coordination during disasters.

Colonel Lee Kuan Chung, director of the Changi Regional Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Coordination Centre; Joseph Martin, director of CFE-DM, and Markus Werne, head of United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, participate in a senior leaders discussion during the Regional Consultative Group on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination for Asia and the Pacific in Singapore, December 2017. DOD/Katryn McCalment

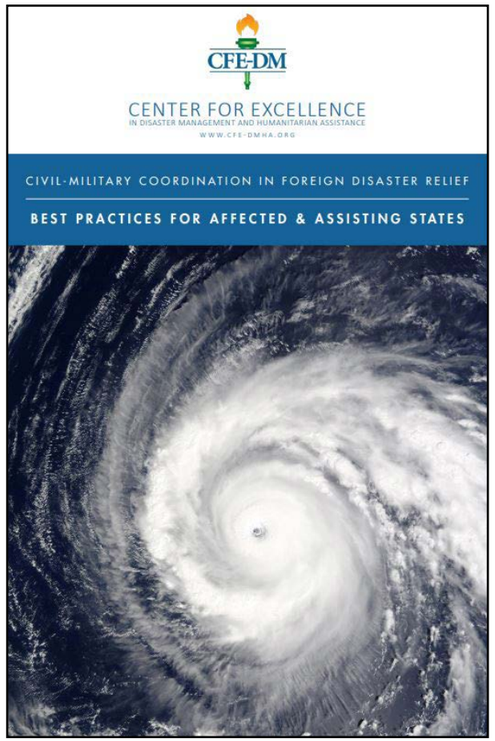
Col. Joseph Martin, director of CFE-DM, points out historic landmarks in Pearl Harbor to Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Stability and Humanitarian Affairs Anne Witkowsky during her visit to Ford Island. DOD/Katryn McCalment

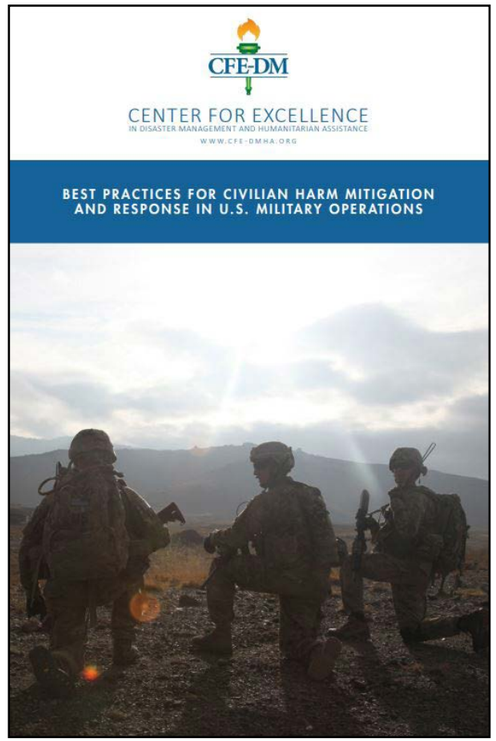
2017

New logo - A torch is a universally recognized symbol for knowledge, education, and guidance. As an element of the Center's seal, the torch represents a streamlined mission that is concentrated into three main initiatives: training and education, applied research and information sharing, and regional civil-military coordination. With the focused mission also comes a shortened acronym for the Center, CFE-DM. While still engaging in humanitarian assistance training and advisement, disaster management and the phases within it more completely describe the organization's focus.

2017

CFE-DM focused its knowledge management efforts on continuing to improve the organization's internal processes and expand its efforts for sharing new CFE-DM products with external audiences. Case studies and pamphlets encapsulate best practices in civil-military coordination in foreign disaster relief (FDR). While lengthy handbooks and numerous guidelines exist, these pamphlets summarize best practices in an accessible primer tailored to targeted audiences.





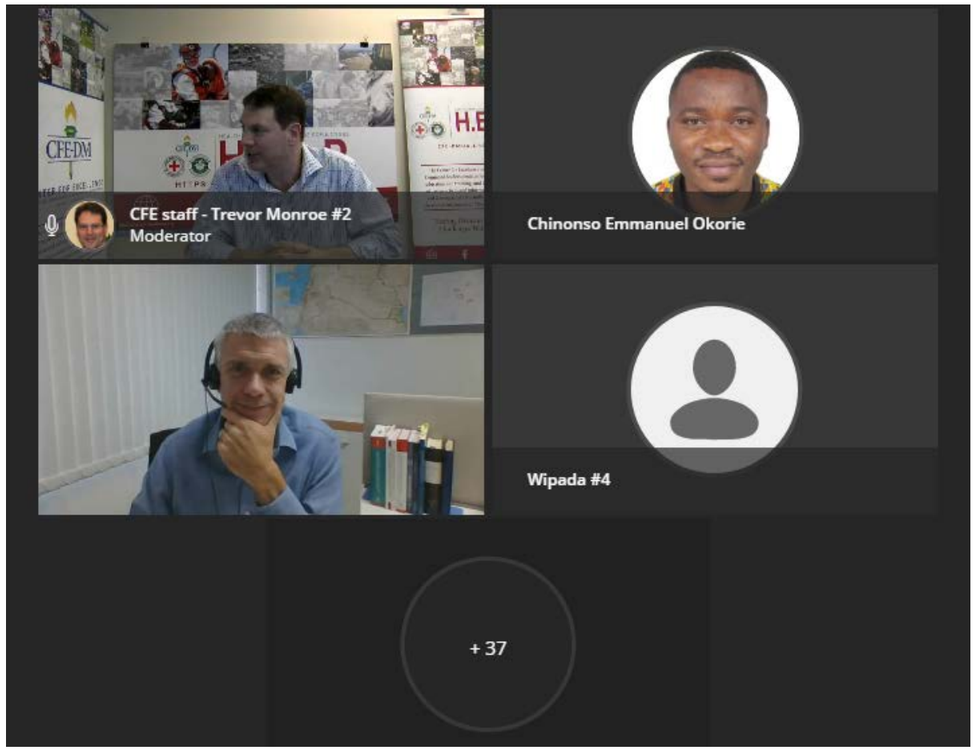
2017-2019

CFE-DM is the USINDOPACOM lead in supporting the Department of Defense co-chairmanship of the ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting (ADMM) Plus Experts Working Group (EWG) on HADR from 2017-2019. It is a 3-year program designed to develop and shape efforts to build ASEAN capacity in disaster response preparedness and coordination. This is co-chaired by Malaysia and the United States and is a priority engagement for the U.S. Secretary of Defense.

U.S. Secretary of Defense James N. Mattis arrives in Singapore ahead of an ASEAN defense ministers' meeting-plus, Oct. 17, 2018. DOD/ Lisa Ferdinando

2020

Shift to virtual delivery of training: In the middle of high operations tempo planning and response during the pandemic, the Center expedited a shift toward virtual engagements and training to ensure continued operations in a COVID-19 environment.

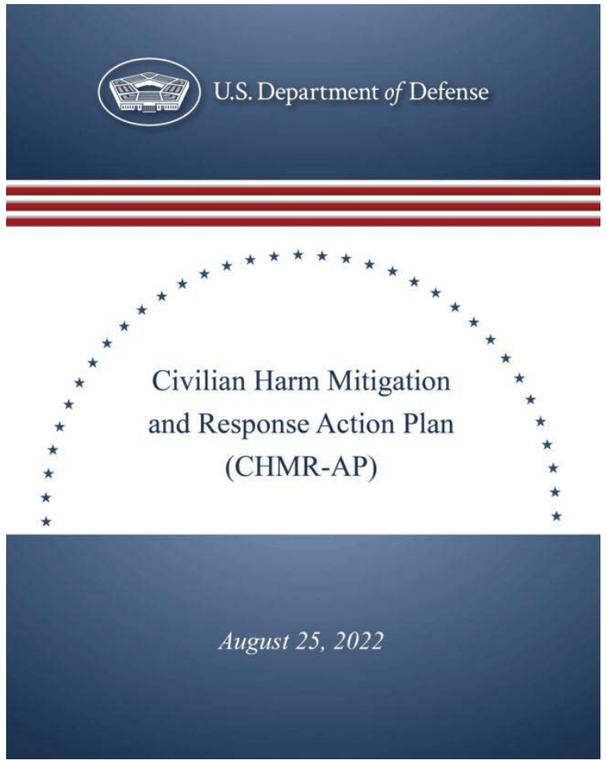


Mr. Peter Evans, Asia Regional Coordinator, International Committee of the Red Cross Armed and Security Forces Programmes, in Bangkok, Thailand, (lower left quadrant) facilitates the Legal Framework module during the first virtual H.E.L.P. the session Dec. 8, 2020. H.E.L.P. is designed to train public health and disaster response professionals, both military and civilian, on the most important public health issues and decision-making skills necessary to effectively respond to the needs of populations in crisis. DOD/Stephanie Liu

2021

USINDOPACOM establishes its Climate Change Impacts (CCI) program, led by CFE-DM, to understand the threats, increase resilience, reduce fragility, and subsequently increase stability throughout the region as part of the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" vision.

More than 30 individuals participated in a Climate Change Wargame co-hosted by the Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance and the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Arctic and Global Resilience team. The wargame, "Ho'okele Mua" or "Navigating the Future," was designed by The Center for Naval Analyses to address various scenarios in which the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command can best prepare for strategic and operational climate change impacts in the region . DOD/Aiyana Paschal



2022

The CFE-DM Training and Engagement (T&E) branch successfully launches its first Humanitarian Assistance Response Training - Conflict (HRT-C) course in 2022. The HART-C course incorporates POC and Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response initiatives into its course to prepare the U.S. joint force and their security partners for supporting, and when necessary, conducting humanitarian assistance before, during, and after combat operations.

2022

CFE-DM assists in the development oF the recently released DOD Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response Action Plan. The plan lays out a series of major actions the DOD will implement to mitigate and respond to civilian harm.

Military and civilian students attend the CFE-DM HART-C course Oct. 19, 2022. DOD/Aiyana Paschal

Present

CFE-DM continues to evolve and meet the challenges related to civil-military coordination within the ever-changing humanitarian assistance and disaster response environment.

"PARTNERING FOR RESILIENCE"

-CFE-DM's newest motto

Twenty-six nations, 38 ships, three submarines, more than 170 aircraft and 25,000 personnel are participating in RIMPAC from June 29 to Aug. 4 in and around the Hawaiian Islands and Southern California. The world's largest international maritime exercise, RIMPAC provides a unique training opportunity while fostering and sustaining cooperative relationships among participants critical to ensuring the safety of sea lanes and security on the world's oceans. RIMPAC 2022 is the 28th exercise in the series that began in 1971. USAF/Staff Sgt. Tyler J. Bolken

CFE-DM Established

Congressional legislation established the Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance to provide and facilitate education, training, and research in civil-military operations to enhance interagency coordination in international disaster management response efforts and to advance Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Response (HADR) capability. Through the guidance and dedication of Senator Daniel K. Inouye, CFE-DM was written into U.S. Code Title 10 and opened in October 1994 at Tripler Army Medical Center.

Handbooks

The first Disaster Management Reference Handbooks are published – Vietnam and Thailand. CFE-DM's Disaster Management Reference Handbooks provide a baseline of information regarding countries most prone to disasters. The handbooks offer readers an operational understanding of a nation's disaster management capability and vulnerability, with detailed information on demographics; hazards; government structure; regional and international assistance; infrastructure; laws and guidelines; risks and vulnerabilities; and other areas vital to a comprehensive disaster management knowledge base.

New Home

After nearly 19 years at Tripler Army Medical Center, CFE-DM finds a new home in the historic Building 76 on Ford Island in the heart of Pearl Harbor.

Climate Change Impacts

USINDOPACOM establishes its Climate Change Impacts (CCI) program, led by CFE-DM, to understand the threats, increase resilience, reduce fragility, and subsequently increase stability throughout the region as part of the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" vision.

1994 | 2001 | 2007 | 2011 | 2013 | 2015 | 2021 | PRESENT

USINDOPACOM

CFE-DM becomes a direct reporting unit to U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (then USPACOM), streamlining efforts for increased civil-military coordination in the Asia Pacific, while continuing to receive program direction and policy guidance from the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations/Low-Intensity Conflict.

Operation Tomodachi

CFE-DM staff travel to Japan in support of Operation Tomodachi following the Tōhoku earthquake and tsunami, which caused severe damage to the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station and resulted in the release of radiation into the environment.

New Logo

New logo - A torch is a universally recognized symbol for knowledge, education, and guidance. As an element of the Center's seal, the torch represents a streamlined mission that is concentrated into three main initiatives: training and education, applied research and information sharing, and regional civil-military coordination. With the focused mission also comes a shortened acronym for the Center, CFE-DM. While still engaging in humanitarian assistance training and advisement, disaster management and the phases within it more completely describe the organization's focus.

Present

CFE-DM continues to evolve and meet the challenges in the ever-changing humanitarian assistance and disaster response environment.

Empowering Resilience

The Positive Impact of Capacity Building in Humanitarian Crises – Insights from a Project Assisting Venezuelan Asylum Seekers in Peru

A Venezuelan family waiting to enter Peru from Ecuador at the border point near Tumbes on June 14, 2019. UNHCR/Helene Caux

By Hiroto Tanaka, , CEO, Japan Agency for Development and Emergency (JADE)

Decades of political and economic crises sank Venezuela into a quagmire of humanitarian disaster. As a result of the deteriorating living conditions in the country, a colossal exodus from Venezuela engulfed the South American continent with a series of human tsunamis from 2018 to the present day.

By August 2023, the number of refugees and asylum seekers from Venezuela amounted to more than 7.7 million worldwide; that is to say, 25 percent of Venezuela's population left the country. Globally it is the largest population exodus in the world, exceeding the one from conflict-ridden Syria. Despite the size of the migration, this exodus never captured large international attention.

Due to the lack of interest from the international community, securing the necessary funding has been an uphill battle that has resulted in aid agencies having to fight to find sufficient resources for the vulnerable.

It all started with political reform in Venezuela. The Bolivarian Revolution, characterized by its populism, nationalism and state-led economy, was introduced by the then President Hugo Chávez in 1999. Nationalization of Venezuela's main industry, oil extraction, led to grave mismanagement and corruption, which then resulted in plummeting oil production despite the country holding the largest oil reserves in the world. Lack of income from oil brought Venezuela to a debt crisis with inflation damaging the entire economy. Revenue shortages created serious problems in social services, like education and health. Heavily subsidized food was no longer available. By 2018, the Venezuelan economy had its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) contracting by 45 percent from 2013. The same year, annual inflation recorded a staggering 65,374.1 percent. As such a crisis was not enough, the U.S.-led economic sanctions against Venezuelan oil export gave a final blow to the beleaguered country. An economic and humanitarian crisis was imminent.

Groupwork for Active Lisening at Volunteer Traning Workshop, Feb 2022, Lima. JADE

Venezuelan refugees gathered for registration of regidence permit at JADE application center, April 2022, Lima. JADE

The large flow of migration from Venezuela that had started in 2015 turned from educated and professionals, with in some cases relative financial availability, to vulnerable and desperate swaths of the population. The countries in South America were not prepared for such a massive influx. Serious tensions arose between Venezuelan asylum seekers and the local communities of the host nations. By 2018, admission to countries like Peru and Chile became stricter due to the sudden increase of migration. Those asylum seekers with unofficial status had no access to social and economic assistance schemes from the host nations. In 2019, the onset of the unprecedented pandemic of COVID-19 and the lockdown that lasted for an extended period put migrants into a more vulnerable position, depriving them of any income opportunity and forcing them into a harder plight.

In 2018, we, a Nongovernmental Organization (NGO), Japan Agency for Development and Emergency (JADE), started a humanitarian emergency project in Peru to improve and safeguard Venezuelan asylum seekers and their livelihoods: Consultation Project for Vulnerable Population among Venezuelan Population Sought Asylum to Peru and Impoverished Peruvians.

Since then, JADE worked with Venezuelan asylum seekers by applying a new approach to the emergency response through capacity development. JADE, our local partner the Misioneros Scalabrinianos (which I will refer to as the Partner), and the Venezuelan and Peruvian project volunteers have achieved some significant progress in improving the status and socioeconomic environment of the migrants, encouraging/empowering beneficiaries to become a population who can help themselves.

The success of the project can be attributed to numerous factors. One of the most important is the collaboration among agencies and the Peruvian government. JADE's project contributed to and benefited from the excellent coordination that there is in Peru among aid agencies and government institutions. This article explains how it happened.


UNHCR / Hélène Caux

Assisting Venezuelan Asylum Seekers in Peru

After the controversial re-election of Hugo Chavez' successor, Nicolas Maduro, in 2018, the exodus from Venezuela spiked from 3 million to more than 5 million in just a year. Such a sudden increase in Venezuelan asylum seekers in over 17 South American countries became a major crisis in the region. As a response in September of the same year, South American countries convened in Quito, the capital of Ecuador, to tackle this unprecedented crisis in the continent. The participating states of the meeting agreed on what is known as "the Quito Process," which aims to set up an inter-governmental mechanism for exchanging information and increase regional coordination to manage the Venezuelan exodus. And such coordination was deeply necessary as young men and women seeking work opportunities that would allow them to remit money back to their family in Venezuela, would move from country to country looking for better opportunities like seasonal migrant laborers.

In Peru, the Peruvian government had welcomed Venezuelan migrants by offering temporary permits, Temporary Permanence Permit (TPP), and accommodating new arrivals by not applying strict rules for the non-documented. Because of this, the country became a destination of choice by many Venezuelans. However, in 2018 the Peruvian government began restricting access by raising the bar of how one could enter the country. As new policies were announced, Venezuelans amassed at the northern border town of Tumbes in the days before these policies would be enacted. As the window of opportunity for entering Peru became smaller, family members who

"MY HUSBAND IS CHECKING NOW HOW TO GET THE ENTRY STAMP ON OUR PASSPORTS. I WANTED TO CROSS THE BORDER BEFORE 15 JUNE, WHEN THE HUMANITARIAN VISA WILL GET MANDATORY, WE DON'T REALLY KNOW WHAT WILL HAPPEN AFTER THAT. WE WANT TO GO TO LIMA WHERE WE CAN STAY WITH FRIENDS. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO REMAIN IN VENEZUELA, THERE IS NO MEDICINE, LITTLE FOOD, AND EVERYHTING IS SO EXPENSIVE. **-Daniela, 29, with her 10-month-old baby at the Ecuador-Peru border (*in left page image*)**

hoped to join relatives, vulnerable people like the elderly, the disabled and members of the LGBT community flooded in. They arrived from Colombia and Ecuador by bus or on foot with virtually nothing in possession; with a rucksack or a bag of used clothes at most. Many had no contacts or anyone to ask for help in Peru, just hearsay.

In April 2018, the regional response to the situation of refugees and migrants from Venezuela seeking access to basic rights and services, protection, as well as self-reliance and socio-economic integration, the Regional Inter-Agency Coordination Platform (R4V), led by the United Nations (UN), was established as a forum to coordinate the response efforts across 17 countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. The local chapter of the response for Venezuelans set up by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) is called the Refugee and Migrant Working Group (GTRM for its acronym in Spanish). NGOs and other agencies participate in the group meetings. In Peru, the GTRM compiles data and information from various agencies and uses the analysis derived from such intelligence to inform and influence policy discussions and decisions at the government and regional level through the Inter-agency Roundtable meeting chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This meeting derives from the Quito Process and includes the Department for Migrations, Superintendence of Migration Peru and Special Commission for Refugees of the Ministry of Interior, international organizations and other agencies. These are the two main coordinating systems for the response to the Venezuelan refugee crisis and have been in operation since 2018.

Peru, a middle-income country, had neither the capacity for hosting such a huge influx nor was pre-


Venezuelans queue up to get an entry stamp on their passports at the Ecuador-Peru border.
UNHCR

Children's seminar against child traficking, May 2022, Lima. JADE

pared for such a sudden arrival of asylum seekers. Aid agencies scrambled to provide basic needs for the new arrivals who crossed the border en masse.

Emergency shelters and soup kitchens were set up to serve the wave of destitute and hungry Venezuelan refugees. Doctors and nurses tended to the exhausted and sick. By the end of 2018, Peru received more than 650,000 Venezuelan refugees and asylum seekers, almost double from the previous year, thus making it the second largest host country next to Colombia, which hosted more than 1 million Venezuelans in the same period.

Despite these grave circumstances, the Peruvian government only declared a 60-day regional health emergency in the north where Venezuelans arrived. Having a high number of nationals in extreme poverty, the government didn't want to upset its vulnerable population with the influx of Venezuelans. Therefore, the government avoided making Venezuelan immigration a political issue which may have easily resulted in massive protests and/or anti-government demonstrations by Peru's predominantly poor indigenous population. The Peruvian government feared internal dissent would have paralyzed the entire economy, a situation it wanted to avoid at all costs.

Contrasting from many refugee and immigrant crises, Venezuelans were not gathered and held in camp facilities. They were free to travel onwards or to find accommodation and rebuild their livelihood on their own anywhere in the country. Most Venezuelans who had no families or relatives resettled by melting away quickly into Peruvian towns. Reality proved somehow less favorable. Although the Peruvian government until the end of October of 2018 offered TPPs enabling migrants to access the formal labor market, but not public education and healthcare, its issuing process was extremely slow and cumbersome. Furthermore, the online registration system had technical problems leaving so many applicants in limbo for a long time. Some even gave up applying for this reason.

As it was difficult for the economy to absorb such a large influx of people, help from aid agencies, the UN, international NGOs and national NGOs, would be essential. But asylum seekers' dispersed state of residence posed a challenge for aid agencies to organize effective emergency support and to provide assistance.

Un-regularized status led to work in low-skilled and poorly paid jobs despite previous careers and experience. Worse, some had to opt for the informal sector, such as street vendors and casual laborers operating in dangerous environments. And in doing so, these new entrants affected the poor Peruvian strata, which also covered this area of the labor market. Discontent was amplified by the Peruvian media through branding Venezuelans as thugs or criminals and risks to Peruvian society, turning the Venezuelan crisis into a political issue in the dispute between Peru's President and Congress. In addition to the difficulties of migration and integration, emerging xenophobia in Peruvian society became a problem.

In October 2018, JADE started to operate in Peru. It soon became evident that a new approach was needed. As a small organization, JADE's philosophy has always been to leverage, develop, and strengthen local capcities. The initial assessment brought us to conclude that given the dispersion of the refugees, we needed to work with someone who had an extended

JADE staff (right) assisting a Venezuelan family expelled from Chile stranded at border, walking under harsh conditions, Atacama desert, June 2022. JADE

network. Both Venezuelans and Peruvians are overwhelmingly practicing Catholics. Therefore, partnering with the church, which as an organization has an extensive network within the communities through parishes and congregations, would bring our efforts to where assistance was most needed. We chose to work with missionaries of the Scalabrinianos as our partner in Peru.

Building on our experience and our Partner's local knowledge and access, JADE proposed an across-the-board assistance system, consisting of legal assistance, psychosocial assistance, seminars, drop-in centers and online help provided to both Venezuelans and Peruvians. With four phases during the five years of operation, the implementation incorporated lessons learned and emerging needs to become more effective.

At the initial stage, there were two key objectives. The first was to support those un-regularized Venezuelans to obtain a TPP and/or a Carnet de Extranjería (CE or permanent residency) through legal consultations and assisting the actual application at the center set up in downtown Lima. During the consultations, our lawyers also assisted with other legal issues, such as abuse, exploitations, rental disputes as well as undesired consequences derived from the status of "irregular," such as underpayment and non-payment by the employers.

The second objective was to offer psychosocial assistance. The delivery of such support was offered both through 'helplines' and face-to-face consultations. Available to both men and women, Venezuelans and Peruvians, the services were well received by female Venezuelans in particular as they were under tremendous pressure from domestic abuse exacerbated by the worsening day-to-day hard living.

Challenges to the Project

The COVID-19 Pandemic

The first case of COVID-19 in Peru was found in March 2020, traced to a traveler arriving from Brazil. The Peruvian government reacted immediately with an abrupt nation-wide lockdown and imposed a complete halt in both economic and social activities. This strict measure paralyzed the entire country for more than six months.

Peru registered more than 6,000 deaths per million population caused by COVID-19, placing the country among the countries with the highest COVID-19 related mortality rates per capita in the world and totaling about 220,000 deaths.

Venezuelans in Peru were severely impacted owing to their low and weak socio-economic status. They instantly lost their already erratic means of income leading to a desperate situation. Venezuelans in Peru

reported more than a 50 percent drop in their income from March 2020.

Agencies were overwhelmed with urgent requests for food, medicine and shelter by Venezuelans who were not able to cope with the crisis. Agencies were trying to assist however they could to save lives. Working through the coordination mechanism of GTRM enabled agencies to have a comprehensive understanding of ongoing aid activities in the field and to gain necessary feedback.

JADE's assistance activities also had to respond to the changing context. Consultations had to be limited to on-line and over the phone. During the worst period of the crises, support focused on distribution of non-food items, hygiene kits and kitchen sets. Our Partner and volunteers on the ground worked earnestly non-stop to meet the needs of the vulnerable. Distribution of goods offered by JADE was combined with the assistance offered by other organizations, for example our hygiene kits with medicines, our kitchen sets with gas cylinders. JADE used these distributions as an opportunity for a detailed needs assessment. JADE asked the beneficiaries for their comments and satisfaction with the services received. Through answers received, we developed a database to analyze their situation and needs for further assistance. This database of beneficiaries and their needs became vital evidence for project planning and resource management. The results were shared with other aid agencies to strengthen coordination and cooperation of aid. This initiative was also useful to manage the limited resources due to the serious shortfall of funds.

The findings from the data analyzed were somewhat striking. Apart from material assistance, beneficiaries valued and requested more human communication. Unsurprisingly, they needed simple, friendly everyday chat with our staff. The long-term nation-wide lockdown caused complete halt in gatherings and meetings of whatever kind and made people very isolated and lonely, even angry for their powerlessness to this extraordinary situation. It not only made Venezuelans anxious and/or depressed but also socially fragile as they were not able to have the help from their friends and relatives. There were many reports of domestic violence by husbands and partners who were troubled by the loss of work and lack of income that also resulted in heavy drinking. Also, abuse and neglect of children was widespread according to our data. In some serious cases, the police were informed, and wives and children were taken to emergency shelter, and psychosocial counselling was offered.

From a psychosocial perspective, the situation for Venezuelans in Peru under pandemic lockdown went from bad to worse. Many Venezuelan women suffered from insomnia, lack of appetite, suicidal thoughts, etc. due to the lack of human relations during the lockdown. We also found that many beneficiaries didn't realize that they needed special help until it was pointed out by our staff and the counsellors.

Post COVID Situation

The outcomes of two years of the COVID-19 pandemic were tragic. The Peruvian economy contracted by 11 percent in 2020, the largest decline in 30 years and the worst in the South American countries. In this period, approximately 6.7 million people lost their jobs and the national poverty rate increased to 30.1 percent by 10 percent from 2019. And extreme poverty reached 5.1 percent in 2020. Despite the pandemic and border closure, the influx of Venezuelan asylum seekers didn't stop. By 2020 Venezuelans in Peru reached 1.3 million, about four percent of Peru's population which was 33.3 million. Most of the Venezuelans are concentrated in the capital of Lima for work opportunities, and its population totals more than a million.

The change of demographics of migrants from Venezuela was now marked. More migrant families with women, children and elderly, many illiterate asylum seekers, asylum seekers with special needs, such as the disabled, joined the exodus in an indication of the disparate situation back in Venezuela. A transformation of the assistance procedure was now required in the following phase. Extra components and further arrangement to family-based and women, children and elderly focused assistance were added to the areas of care.

Responding to different issues of new arrivals and "returnees," more staff and volunteers were positioned leading to new projects by actively reaching the population in need by the end of 2021. As the pandemic receded, face-to-face consultations on legal and psychosocial support restarted. Seminars on the same subjects were given to Venezuelans and local Peruvians to strengthen their awareness and capacity. Topics covered helping the elderly and deterring child abuse with additional seminars on preventing child trafficking and sexual exploitation given to parents with young children.

Capacity training for Venezuelan and Peruvian mothers and pregnant women, Jul y2022, Lima. JADE

Post COVID Assistance: Creating a Hub and Network of Assistance and Extending to the Communities

Capitalizing on the extensive network of our Partner the Scalabrinianos, we started to train Venezuelan and Peruvian volunteers to be able to respond to the refugees and local population and the community. The training of the volunteers, through workshops and seminars, was done in a way to increase the capacity of individuals and empower them so that the capacity of the community would increase. To develop stronger connections among our team and volunteers and to refresh their skills, monthly meetings were organized with the dual purpose of sharing information and reflecting on learning both at a team and personal level.

We also began to engage informal local leaders and religious leaders and lay people to increase their role in assisting not only Venezuelans but also the vulnerable Peruvians.

Impact of the War in Ukraine

When Russia launched a large-scale invasion against Ukraine in February 2022, the entire world was immediately affected, including Peru. Sudden increases in oil and grain prices in the world market led to shortage of commodities and price hikes. Peru's overall inflation reached 8.3 percent, the highest in more than a quarter of a century. Along with the economic crisis, Peru's political standoff between the Congress and the President heightened. By November 2022, there was an alleged self-coup by the then President Pedro Castill. In December 2022, Castillo was impeached by the Congress and arrested for trying to dissolve the Congress. Political instability

immediately marred the tourism industry and had repercussions on the economy. The impact on Peru was to hit the poorest segment of the society heavily. The distressed population took to the streets. Roadblocks on the Pan-American highway, the main logistic route for export, seriously hampered trade. Peru's main export of mineral ores and copper was seriously hindered. The situation worsened, pushing Peru to the brink of civil war and prompting the government to declare a state of emergency in several states.

On the one hand, there was an attempt to shift attention to Venezuelans. An angry population saw Venezuelans in Peru as a burden to the country. The Peruvian government responded by introducing strict policies against Venezuelans. Venezuelans without appropriate residence permits were banned from renting accommodation and employment. Those who did not have necessary documents or had let the documents expire, were fined for the days they spent as irregular status; the fines could amount to a thousand U.S. dollars per household, impossible for them to pay.

In contrast, the need for help by both Venezuelans and Peruvians brought the most vulnerable together. This was an opportunity to do more integration work. The aid agencies operating on the ground worked through GTRM to influence the government. Our volunteers, among the others, were instrumental in collecting information about the Venezuelans' predicament and conveyed it to the GTRM working together to identify mitigating actions. As result of the fervent advocacy by the aid agencies to the Peruvian government through GTRM and Inter-agency Roundtable, an amnesty for accumulated fines was declared in June 2023. With the amnesty, the Peruvian government set in place one last push for the regularization of Venezuelans; it was slated to end in November 2023.

By the time these decisions were taken, the migration of Venezuelans had become fluid. Two types of migration patterns were emerging. A circular one (Venezuela to Colombia then to Peru and Chile, Ecuador or Colombia, etc. then back to Peru) and a pendular one (back and forth between Venezuela and Peru). Those migrants who stayed lived in precarious situations. As people moved, it was increasingly difficult to keep track of them and to help.

JADE responded by deploying Venezuelan and Peruvian volunteers to the areas where vulnerable Venezuelan asylum seekers had relocated or at the crossroads of the migration flows. As vulnerability increased, the ability of the Venezuelans to appreciate a more formal and organized governmental system requiring registration and identification documents proved to be low. Many Venezuelans were taken advantage of by profiteers. There was a lot of confusion and hearsay about how to regularize, which disempowered the Venezuelans further.

To improve this situation, messages conveyed by our volunteers were reviewed. The quality of the information shared by the volunteers must be exact and verified. Rumors must be dispelled and expectations managed to avoid disappointment. Our teams were continuously informed with up-to-date information on regularization and other government procedures, both from feedback from GTRM meetings and micro-level direct connection with government offices and a capillary network of contacts and information sharing developed at operational levels.

Being in coordinating mechanisms at the macro level (GTRM) and also at micro level (network of aid workers) was particularly useful, allowing the project to provide the assistance and necessary help to the vulnerable population in time and, therefore, prevent a humanitarian disaster.

Now with the spirit of leaving no one behind, the volunteers visit and make themselves available to the community so that the vulnerable population can contact them for help. They also liaise with the local community leaders and residents to find the people in need. They also contact local authorities for government support and local businesspeople for resource mobilization.

For information dissemination about the assistance provided, we put up posters and distributed leaflets, created a YouTube channel as well as using other social media to get wide recognition of the project. In addition to the outreach, our trained Venezuelan and Peruvian volunteers also offered primary assistance, referring to specialized organizations when necessary and providing advice; in essence creating a dense network- a spider web like safety net – for the vulnerable.

Forcibly displaced Venezuelans undertake a long and treacherous journey to reach Chile. The country's northern border is particularly harsh: a mountainous desert exposed to extreme temperatures ranging from -20°C to +40°C. UNHCR

In addition to the exceptional commitment of our Partner and our volunteers, this was also achieved from running the project for five years and sustained presence. Beneficiaries, in fact, recommended our services and as a result, demand escalated.

Educating Venezuelans and raising their awareness proved to be challenging. Their unhelpful and submissive attitudes, resulting from mistreatment and despair, led them to disregard documents and the reasons for needing them, as they often relied on the state in Venezuela rather than taking initiative themselves. Illiteracy was also an issue for some. Volunteers continued to explain the importance of securing benefits from regularization, keeping communication/documents to/from ministries, securing documents, printing emails, photocopying documents and laminating them, and making appropriate notes for the record, etc.

The regularization drive was not the only opportunity that arose in 2022. By expanding our network of assistance and referrals, volunteers acted as hubs of the assistance and contact points responding immediately when someone calls for help. As poor Peruvians were hit hard by the economic crisis, demand for our services increased. Anyone in need of in-kind assistance or advice can be accommodated without being left without care, as we provide wide-ranging support regaurdless of nationality. Some elderly and disabled beneficiaries were escorted with our volunteers to hospital for medical care. One volunteer arranged with a community a funeral and memorial service for a mother who lost her daughter to illness, but was too poor to organize one.

If the beneficiary's needs are more than our volunteer's capacity, that person will be referred to an appropriate professional, e.g., legal, medical and psychological assistance without delay. Furthermore, our volunteers receive requests for topics to be covered in the brush-up workshops and seminars.

Involving the people from the communities we serve has heightened awareness and a sense of responsibility toward their communities, fostering self-reliance. They are now well-informed about who to contact for reliable and accurate information as well as to request essential assistance. This has, in turn, expanded their capacity to address issues independently, bolstering their resilience in times of crises.

To date, JADE has provided training to over 300 Venezuelan asylum seekers and Peruvian citizens, appointing 30 volunteer leaders from the underprivileged community to spearhead our outreach project. These dedicated individuals diligently carry out their responsibilities, maintaining consistent contact and offering necessary support in three districts of Lima, where Venezuelan asylum seekers and impoverished Peruvians predominantly reside. In doing so, they address the needs of hundreds of thousands of vulnerable individuals.

Key Success Factors

In relation to the size of the Venezuelan crisis our project was small but very effective in extending our assistance. Such effectiveness was assured by a number of factors.

Community Outreach and Creating a Hub of Assistances

The project also operated as a hub of information where aid agencies can drop any information on whatever resource available or assistance required. As we maintained the database of beneficiaries' situation it was quickly matched with a vulnerable population.

Responding to the rapidly changing environment of the beneficiaries, JADE focused on outreach instead of waiting for Venezuelans to seek assistance.

The premise was that, rather than waiting for requests for help, we established a network capable of gathering information about beneficiaries in need of assistance but lacking the means to access it or not knowing where to seek help. Additionally, we prioritized local community development by imparting skills for problem-solving whenever possible or guiding individuals on how to access additional assistance. This approach was designed to enhance the resilience of both individuals and the community.

Capacity Building of Individuals

Our outreach volunteers are Venezuelan and Peruvian volunteers from the same community. JADE recruited them through self-nomination and recommendation from the community. There are also ex-beneficiaries who were grateful for and motivated by the project who became volunteers for it.

The project first trained both Venezuelan asylum seekers and vulnerable Peruvians aiming to increase the capacity of individuals and upscale the capability of the community in the long run. It also aimed to raise their awareness and increase the sense of responsibility as a member of the community.

The training of volunteers consists of weeks of active listening, awareness to spot issues through small chats and meetings on topics such as domestic violence and neglect, and how to make referrals in case of further help needed, etc.

After the training, some volunteers were selected based on their ability and willingness to received additional leadership courses to perform as responsible leaders.

As a result, a strong bond and network of support for the people in need was established. These processes have brought about more resilience to mitigate and reduce the impact of the crisis.

Maximizing Skills of Venezuelans and Ownership

The project enlisted Venezuelan asylum seekers with certificates and experience in legal and psychosocial fields as volunteers who were not qualified to practice in Peru due to the licensing process.

They worked under the supervision of Peruvian professionals and proved to be invaluable contributors to the project, as their knowledge of their community and expertise in their respective fields greatly enhanced the project's capabilities.

Being a part of the project motivated the volunteers, bolstering self-esteem and providing a sense of purpose in the community. This made a huge difference in their psyche. They were not destitute refugees or asylum seekers living only at the mercy of others, but instead were dynamic and capable members who actively engage with and improve the community.

Developing Empathy

Leveraging the existing skills and capabilities of Venezuelans and Peruvians within the outreach project enhanced their sense of responsibility and commitment to both the project and their community. This, in turn, fostered a more empathetic and approachable attitude among our volunteers toward others in need, ultimately leading to a positive impact.

Dynamic Process of Feedback

The project kept a database of beneficiaries' needs and used feedback received from them to improve our efforts. The answers to the feedback questionnaires served as a collection of assistance needs and led to new projects, e.g., creation of community volunteer groups to support the community.

The relevance of this feedback was well communicated to them so that beneficiaries were aware of their contribution to our response.

The Multiplier Effect on Working in Strong Coordination

Thanks to the different levels of coordination, Inter-agency Roundtable at the top and GTRM, as well as at the grassroots level, our network with the beneficiaries and collaboration between our volunteers and other agencies at the operational level, we have established a mechanism to ensure that beneficiaries' needs are not overlooked. During events related to migration in South America, one UN official remarked, "In Peru, there is an underlying feeling among Venezuelans that there is an access to help," which significantly impacts their lives.

From food to funerals, the range of their needs was extensive, making it essential to have the right connections. Sharing experience both among agencies and from within our project team allowed us to identify emerging patterns and develop appropriate solutions for handling them effectively.

To address the challenges of an extremely underfunded program amid international appeals and constant issues like the pandemic and political crises, numerous small projects were implemented, akin to pieces of a patchwork addressing diverse needs. This wouldn't have been achievable without the continuous innovation of our project methodology, where an out-of-the-box approach played a crucial role.

Lessons Learned

The following are important lessons learned. They may not be novel, but they should be reiterated in the

complex environment in which the project operated.

Flexibility

The project encountered numerous challenges, such as the pandemic and the socioeconomic instability of the country. The key to success was the project continuously maintained flexibility to cope with the rapidly shifting environment.

This was achieved through constant monitoring and reviewing of the mode of operation by receiving timely feedback from different levels of the project, i.e., managers, team members and volunteers, and the beneficiaries.

Engage and Include Local Population and Facilitate Reintegration

Involving the local population and community leaders allowed the project to gain acceptance within the community, which, in turn, garnered positive support from the local population and facilitated a smooth reintegration of Venezuelans into the local community.

Initially, the project invited the local population and community leaders to meetings to introduce the project and engage in consultations with them, fostering their participation and understanding. This inclusive approach also created a ripple effect of assistance, such as local communities and shops beginning to donate goods to the needy.

For the reintegration, the project adopted a more subtle approach rather than a direct and conspicuous one, which could have potentially triggered a backlash from the host community. The project organized cultural, food and sport gatherings to facilitate a deeper understanding between the Venezuelans and Peruvian societies and allowed them to engage and interact in a more informal manner rather than organizing "reintegration seminars." The project has received positive comments in the questionnaire, such as "I consider Peru as my new home," or "I'd like to continue living in Peru," indicating the willingness of Venezuelans to reintegrate despite difficulties they face.

Overcoming Myopic Mindset of Venezuelans

Distress and disappointment from the challenges of migration and inability to settle imbued in Venezuelans a mindset of "short-termism," moving from place to place, from assistance to assistance, all without appreciating the value that the regularization of their status would bring. Our combined approach of legal and psychosocial assistance facilitated dealing with emotional grief and understanding the importance of the paperwork as this opens opportunities in Peru, i.e., work, education, healthcare, etc.

Peace-building

Peace-building and conflict prevention/resolution concepts and tools were delivered in workshops covering broad themes like "effective relationships" to the volunteers. Advice was provided to mitigate and prevent tensions between Venezuelans and the locals. These proved to be very effective where populations of many anguished by poverty and inequality of both sides reside.

During the Christmas of 2022, some Venezuelan asylum seekers who are beneficiaries of the project voluntarily organized a Christmas lunch and distributed presents to express their gratitude to the local communities for accepting them. They invited disadvantaged members of the community in impoverished areas of Lima. This was a pinnacle moment marking the success of the project, demonstrating that Venezuelan beneficiaries can also contribute to positive change within the community, It challenged the stereotypes that had categorized them as a helpless and incapable population in constant need of assistance, showing that they are, in fact, capable and valuable members of the community.

I CONSIDER PERU AS MY NEW HOME”

Conclusion

In August 2023, the number of Venezuelan asylum seekers in Peru reached 1.54 million, and the number continues to increase, placing Peru among the top ten countries worldwide hosting refugees and other asylum seekers in need of international protection.

Addressing the needs of this substantial population requires a large-scale humanitarian program, but unfortunately, as the crisis went unrecognized internationally, the response was dangerously inadequate. Despite the significant population in need, only USD 7.6 million, which is less than 2.4 percent of the USD 318 million required for 2023, has been pledged by international donors so far.

Fortunately, due to the endless efforts of aid agencies on the ground, Peru managed to avert a humanitarian catastrophe, a stark contrast to the other South American countries that forcibly extradited asylum seekers.

For NGOs like JADE, it is imperative to develop innovative solutions by harnessing the potential already present in the beneficiaries. Increasing the capacity of both the beneficiaries themselves and the local communities through empowerment and close networking proved indispensable. This approach led to greater ownership of the project by Venezuelans and bolstered the resilience of their community.

In addition to our efforts, underlying systems and coordination frameworks provided favorable conditions for the project. The existence of robust interactions, both top-down at the inter-agency level and bottom-up among aid workers on the ground, generated synergies at all stages, which were crucial for the effective implementation of assistance. Moreover, collaborative lateral cooperation, rooted in commitment among various agencies, further bolstered this endeavor. This cooperation was enhanced by both micro-level and macro-level networks and individual contacts. A significant accomplishment of this framework was securing amnesty from prosecution and the exoneration of fines for Venezuelans who did not successfully complete the regularization process.

The efforts of aid agencies persist, and Venezuelans continue their struggle for a better life. However, now they have the capacity and resilience to overcome crises independently and within their communities, offering hope on both sides.

Finally, the author extends their gratitude to the local partner, Scalabrinianos, for their dedicated work and cooperation in this difficult undertaking.

At the time of writing, this project had been recognized as a best practice for addressing the migrant issue in Peru by the Peruvian government.

Christmas lunch organized by Venezuelan refugees for vulnerable Peruvians, December 2022, Lima.
JADE

A Look Back at a History of Disasters:

30 years of USINDOPACOM's Foreign Disaster Response Support in the Indo-Pacific

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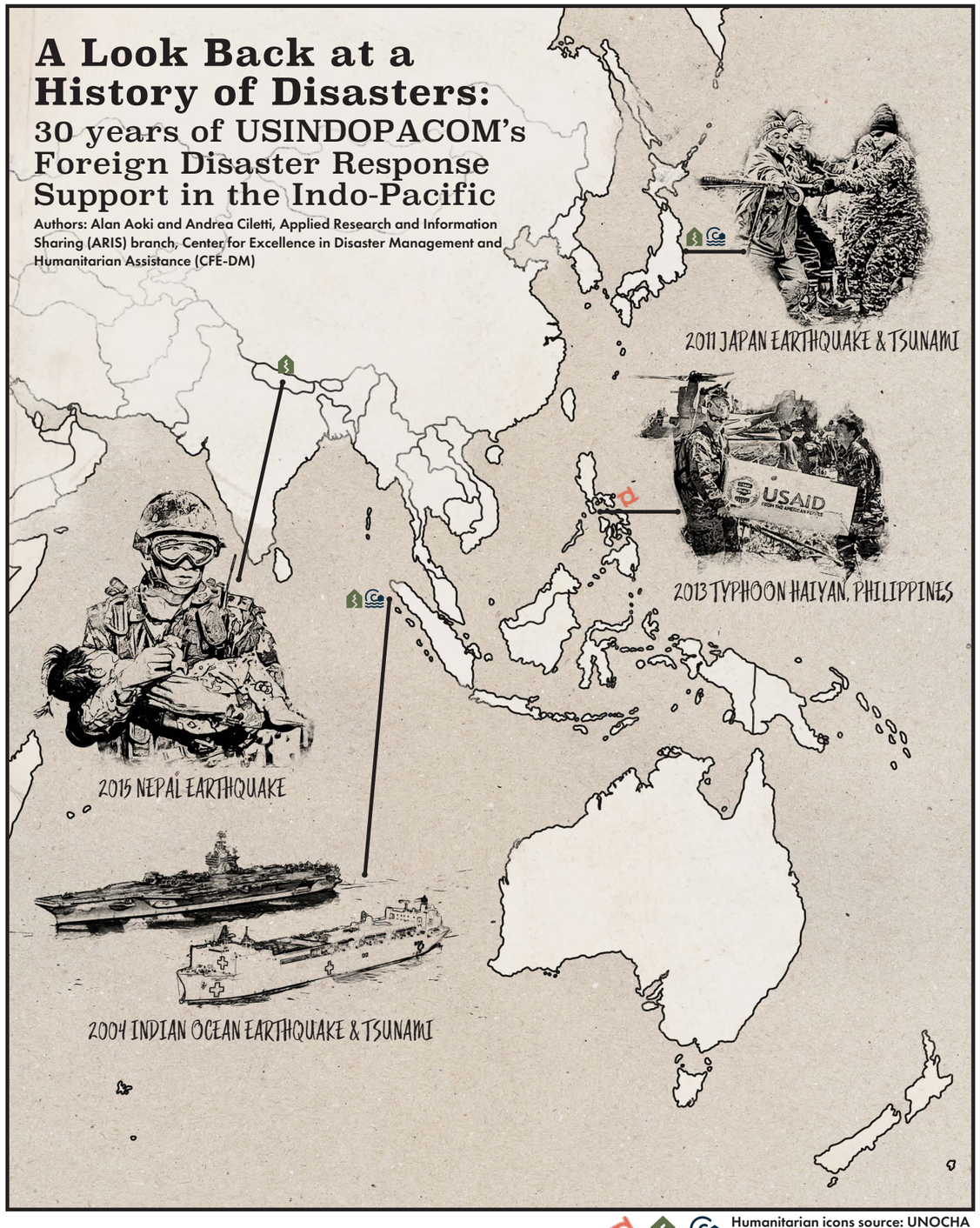


Humanitarian icons source: UNOCHA

Worldwide, the Indo-Pacific is the region most prone to natural disasters. Between 1970 and 2020, Asia and the Pacific has accounted for 87% of the total global population affected by natural hazards. This amounts to an annual average of roughly 122 million people affected by disaster in the region. Because of the frequency and widespread effects of disasters in the Indo-Pacific, regional and international responders have been called upon to support major disaster relief efforts. These responders include militaries from across the region, including U.S. armed forces. This article looks back over the last 30 plus years at some major U.S. military foreign disaster response operations in the Indo-Pacific region. From that period, operations selected to highlight include Department of Defense (DOD) support to the relief efforts for the Indian Ocean Earthquake and Tsunami in December 2004, the Japan Earthquake and Tsunami in March 2011, Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines in November 2013, and the Nepal Earthquake in April 2015.

Aside from the devastating loss of life and injuries from disasters, economic damages have also been severe in the region. Between 1970 and 2018, the region lost US$1.5 trillion in economic damages, mostly because of floods, storms, droughts, earthquakes, and tsunami. Most recently, in 2022 alone, over 140 disasters struck the region, affecting over 64 million people, causing over 7,500 deaths, and resulting in an estimated US$7 billion in damages. The Indo-Pacific is home to the "Ring of Fire," a path along the Pacific Ocean where 75% of the earth's volcanoes lie and 90% of earthquakes occur, a factor that contributes significantly to the number of hazards and disasters in the region.

Because of the frequency and intensity of disasters in the region, the United States Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM) was called upon to support at least 43 foreign disaster responses in the region from June 1991 to the end of November 2023. This number of responses of course does not reflect every significant disaster that struck the Indo-Pacific. In most cases, civilian and military responders from throughout the region can respond to disasters on their own. While many militaries in the region are relied upon and able to respond to disasters in their own countries, it is less common for regional militaries, such as the U.S. military, to be called upon to support international relief efforts. Furthermore, climate change is increasing the demand for military operations and impacting the readiness and cost to meet those demands. It also affects the militaries of allies and partners.

Additionally, in most cases, the U.S. government (USG) is able to respond to most U.S.-declared foreign disasters utilizing civilian response assets. The DOD only assists the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)/Bureau of Humanitarian Affairs (BHA) (formerly the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, or OFDA) in around 10% of U.S.-declared foreign disasters on average annually. Those events are usually major disasters where affected nations' resources are overwhelmed and civilian and military response capacites have been exceeded, thus the support of unique foreign military assets (FMA) such as logistical capabilities (e.g., heavy lift) are requested.

The majority of DOD relief operations have generally been for major natural disasters, and most of those have been in response to earthquakes, tsunami, major storms, and flooding. Since 1970, natural hazards in Asia and the Pacific have affected 6.9 billion people and killed more than 2 million people, which accounts for almost 60% of the worldwide disaster death toll.[1] Most of the deaths were from storms and earthquakes, followed by tsunami and floods.

There have been a few U.S. military operations that went beyond what one might deem a "typical" natural disaster response and these include the 2018 search-and-rescue (SAR) operation of a youth soccer team stranded in a cave in Thailand, regional search and surveillance for Rohingya refugees leaving Myanmar on boats for parts of Southeast Asia in the early months of 2015, and supporting the international search for Malaysian Airlines Flight MH370 that went missing in March 2014. Additionally, while most DOD response to disasters is in support of USAID/BHA as the lead U.S. federal agency, in a few cases, foreign disaster relief support originates from a military-to-military level, such as when USINDOPACOM provided support after a request from the Armed Forces of the Philippines

(AFP) for the Typhoon Dosksuri relief effort in July and August 2023.

Of note, U.S. military forces were called upon to support disaster relief efforts in the USINDOPACOM Area of Responsibility (AOR) every year from 2004, when the devastating Indian Ocean tsunami struck the region, through 2018, when U.S. military forces helped the regional response to the earthquake and tsunami that hit Palu, Indonesia. The annual pace picked up again in April 2021, when U.S. Navy Seabees assisted Timor-Leste with flood relief operations. This was followed in January 2022 by support to the USAID/BHA-led USG response and overall regional relief efforts for the eruption of the Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai volcano in Tonga. In March 2022, the U.S. Navy assisted Australian Defence Forces with the Queensland Australia flood recovery. As mentioned earlier, in late July to early August 2023, U.S. Marines supported the AFP in the response to Typhoon Doksuri (locally known in the Philippines as Egay). As of this writing, the last natural disaster response involving U.S. military forces in the Indo-Pacific occurred in August 2023, in which U.S. military forces supported the USAID/BHA-led USG response to the Mount Bagana eruption in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville, Papua New Guinea.

For more information on the USINDOPACOM response to Typhoon Doksuri, please see CFE-DM's "Case Study No. 11: U.S. Military Response to Typhoon Doksuri/Egay in the Philippines." https://www.cfe-dmha.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=y8eq6AbXJFU%3d&portalid=0

December 2004 – Indian Ocean Earthquake and Tsunami

Background

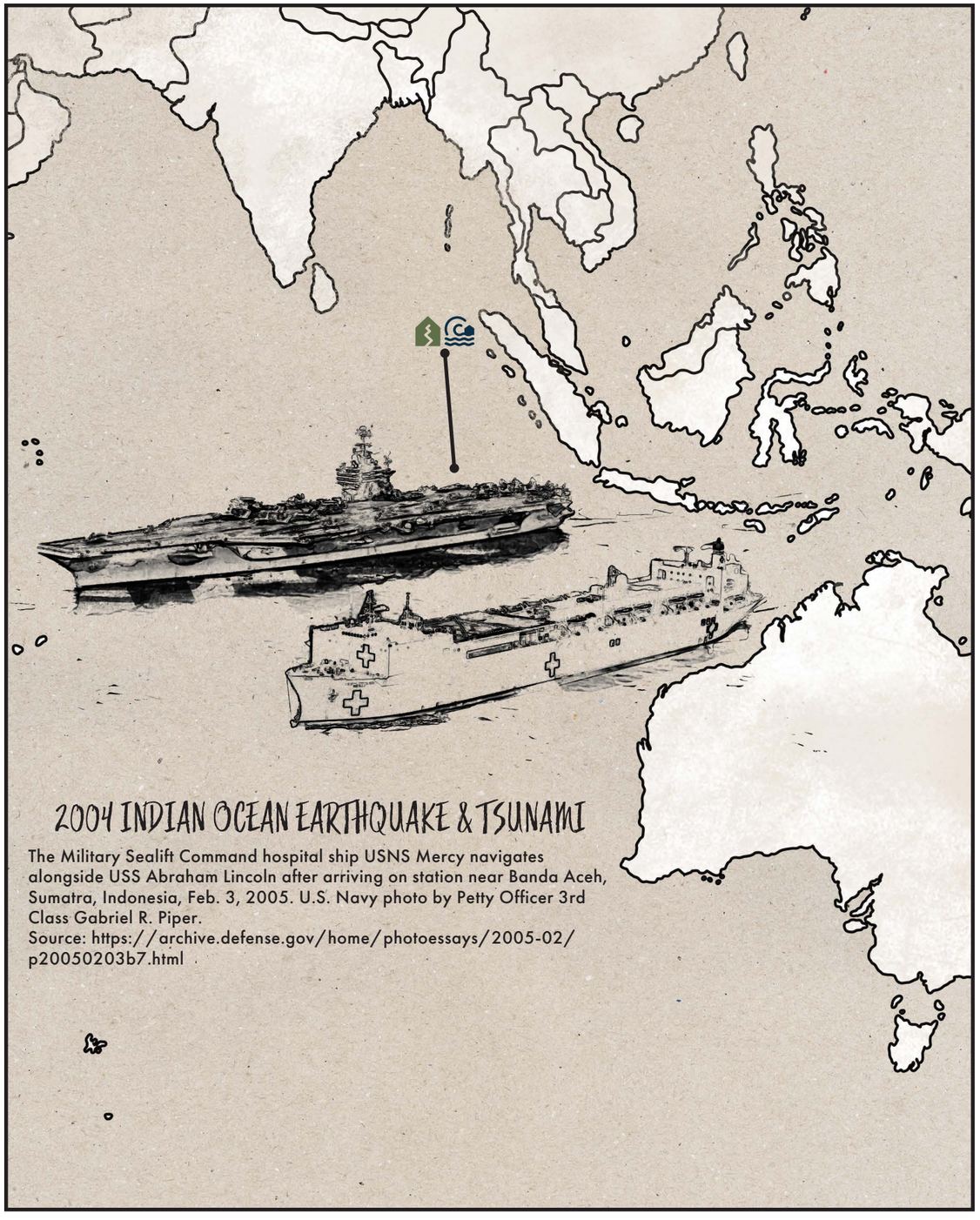
On December 26, 2004, a massive 9.0-magnitude earthquake occurred off Indonesia's westernmost Aceh province, located on the northern end of Sumatra Island. The powerful temblor created tsunami waves that affected 14 countries, mainly in Southeast Asia and South Asia, but that also reached as far away as Africa. The tsunami waves travelled at speeds up to 600-800 kilometers (km) per hour in the ocean and were up to 30 meters high when they struck some coastal areas at speeds of up to 60 km per hour. More than 228,000 people from 40 nations were killed in the disaster and nearly 2.5 million in total were affected across the region. Economic damages amounted to nearly US$10 billion. The countries most affected by the tsunami were Indonesia, Thailand, Sri Lanka, India, and the Maldives. In response to the disaster, thirty-five nations from across the globe contributed 75 helicopters, 41 ships, 43 fixed-wing aircraft, and more than 30,000 military personnel to assist in relief efforts. Of this unprecedented number, around 16,000 military personnel were from the U.S.

Operation Unified Assistance

Less than a day after the tsunami struck, then U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell announced that the U.S. would deploy a Navy P-3 aircraft to help assess damages. The DOD began to support relief operations in Indonesia, the Maldives, Sri Lanka, and Thailand beginning December 30, 2005. U.S. Pacific Command (USPACOM) called its relief operations in support of affected nations in the region, "Operation Unified Assistance." Badly affected Aceh province received the bulk of the U.S. military's relief aid.

Combined Support Force 536 (CSF 536), led by Marine Lt. Gen. Robert R. Blackman Jr., commander of the III Marine Expeditionary Force (III MEF) in Japan, was formed to support relief operations. CSF 536 was set up at the Royal Thai Navy Airfield in U-Tapao, Thailand. Within 36 hours of the disaster, Air Force aircraft were taking off from Yokota Air Base, Japan, carrying relief supplies to U-Tapao, and less than a day-and-a-half later, C-130s and helicopters were delivering supplies to survivors.

On December 29, U.S Transportation Command (TRANSCOM) dispatched a C-17 from McChord Air Force Base (AFB), Wash., to carry a maintenance package from Yokota to U-Tapao, to support the Yokota-based C-130s. In the next few days, C-5 and C-17 airlifters carried helicopters, relief supplies, support personnel, and emergency responders. In the first few weeks after the disaster, helicopters were the only means of delivering relief supplies to survivors along the coast in Indonesia.



2004 INDIAN OCEAN EARTHQUAKE & TSUNAMI

The Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS Mercy navigates alongside USS Abraham Lincoln after arriving on station near Banda Aceh, Sumatra, Indonesia, Feb. 3, 2005. U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Gabriel R. Piper.
Source: https://archive.defense.gov/home/photoessays/2005-02/p20050203b7.html

The theater airlift control center at TRANSCOM responded to requests from the air mobility division of the Pacific Air Operations Center at Hickam AFB, Hawaii. The Pacific Air Ops Center then provided command and control and integration capability for all U.S. fixed-wing missions within the Pacific theater. Air Force aircraft involved in the relief effort included 35 C-17s, 24 C-5s, 21 C-130s, six HH-60s, two KC-135s, and one C-21. Nine Navy P-3C patrol aircraft conducted surveillance.

The U.S. military airlift effort averaged 522,000 pounds of food, water, and other supplies per day over the 47 days of operations. Some relief supplies and support equipment had to come by C-5 Galaxy's and C-17 Globemaster IIIs which flew all the way from the continental United States to the central distribution point at U-Tapao, and Banda. The airlift operated mainly from U-Tapao in a "hub and spoke" system. C-130 Hercules aircraft then distributed the supplies to smaller airfields throughout the affected area. From there, U.S. helicopters and other nations moved them to affected populations.

By February 23, 2005, Air Mobility Command (AMC) aircraft flew 106 missions, airlifting 2,768 passengers and 3,370 tons of cargo to Colombo, Sri Lanka, U-Tapao, and Banda Aceh and Jakarta, Indonesia. The 353d Special Operations Group flew MC-130s to deliver some 800,000 pounds of relief, evacuate 32 casualties, and transported 591 aid workers to parts of Indonesia and Thailand.

More than 2,000 airmen from 100 Air Force units and 14 bases, as far away as Charleston AFB, were involved. They supported or flew 30 Air Force aircraft that conducted more than 1,400 sorties in the region and scores of long-haul missions into the theater by AMC C-17s and C-5s.

U.S. Military Response in Sri Lanka, Thailand and the Maldives

The original plan was for the Bonhomme Richard Expeditionary Strike Group (BHRESG) to support the response in Sri Lanka, but the group was redirected to Indonesia, as Aceh was the most severely affected area. The USS Duluth headed to Sri Lanka to support operations there. U.S. Marine helicopters lifted supplies from the port at Sri Lanka's capital Colombo, to coastal villages in the south, east and north and U.S. forces provided fresh water in the initial stages of the response. In Thailand, the U.S. military mostly aided in SAR operations, as the damage was generally less severe, and the national government could respond to the disaster. A team of U.S. military forensic experts were deployed to Thailand to assist the government.[i]

The New York Air National Guard's 105th Airlift Wing flew C-5s to airlift helicopters, water purification equipment and emergency supplies from Kadena Air Base, Japan, to Thailand and Sri Lanka. A U.S. civil-military team was in the Maldives on January 3, 2005, to assess damages in preparation for U.S. assistance. On January 17, two military supply ships were sent to assist the Maldives.

U.S. Military Response in Indonesia

The leader of the Indonesian Armed Forces (TNI), General Endriartonio Sutarto, requested assistance through his military counterparts in Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, and the U.S., based on previous relationships. Militaries from these countries arrived in Banda Aceh and Medan, the capital of North Sumatra province, soon after the request was made. The government set a limit of 90 days for the emergency relief phase with the understanding that all foreign military assets would withdraw from Aceh by that deadline. TNI had the responsibility for coordinating with foreign militaries and provided force protection for foreign troops due to the long-running rebellion by the Free Aceh Movement (GAM). Daily coordination meetings were chaired by the TNI.

Foreign military assets were sent bilaterally by 16 different countries to Indonesia. Negotiations occurred for all force deployments, particularly on rules of engagement and status-of-forces agreements. The foreign militaries were initially asked to support the effort with SAR, evacuation, and stabilization efforts. The militaries provided naval assets, fixed-wing aircraft, and helicopters. Other top priorities included medical evacuations, distribution of relief, shelter, land clearance and prevention of diseases.

The U.S. military established its command-and-control center and operating base for tsunami relief at U-Tapao. For relief efforts in Aceh, The U.S. Combined Support Group–Indonesia (CSG-I) was created with its headquarters based in Medan.

On December 28, the U.S. military's operation forward command element, CSF 536, arrived in Thailand to begin coordinating the military assistance as part of the U.S. disaster relief effort. The next day, the United States announced the deployment of the Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group (ALCSG), which contained five ships, and the BHRESG, which contained seven ships. Additionally, a Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force (SPMAGTF) consisting of two ships was also deployed.[i]

The first elements of the ALCSG arrived off the coast of Banda Aceh on December 31 and sent out its first helicopter relief flight and began ferrying food and water to survivors on the severely affected western coast of Aceh. The first elements of the BHRESG arrived near Medan and began to transfer supplies on January 3. A few days later, the BHRESG began operations in Meulaboh, in Aceh province. The USS Bonhomme Richard, the USS Essex and the USS Fort McHenry supported the operation for a month. Twenty-eight helicopters from the ships flew more than 100 missions daily, dropping off relief and performing medical evacuations on the west coast of Aceh. The TNI often managed the distribution of the relief supplies to survivors. Two U.S. hovercrafts were also utilized to gain access to stranded populations. The ALCSG also provided helicopters to the World Health Organization (WHO), to transport members of military and civilian organizations for assessments.[i]

U.S. planes and helicopters from the Abraham Lincoln and Bonhomme Richard flew some 600 sorties and delivered 4.8 million pounds of food, water, and medicine. U.S. forces also evacuated 3,000 injured to shelters and hospitals. Indonesian, U.S., German, Australian and other military officers met with UN personnel to coordinate efforts at Banda Aceh airport each morning.

TRANSCOM also provided a seven-person tanker airlift control element (TALCE) out of Travis AFB for on-site management of airfield operations, command, control and communications, aerial port services, maintenance, security, weather, and intelligence. The TALCE team flew into the damaged airfield at Banda Aceh and helped turn the small military facility into a major hub for distribution.

The hospital ship USNS Mercy joined the operation on February 2, 2005, relieving the USS Abraham Lincoln, which left the area on February 4. The Mercy provided medical and surgical capabilities to assist during the early stages of the recovery phase. Personnel on the Mercy also provided sanitation, water quality surveillance and disease prevention measures in temporary camps. Additionally, personnel also helped repair equipment and facilities in Indonesian hospitals and provided training to healthcare workers. In total, the Mercy treated some 20,000 patients affected by the tsunami. The Mercy and the last U.S. military assets left Indonesia on March 16, 2005.[ii]

At the height of the relief operation, there were nearly 16,000 U.S. military personnel in the region supporting relief efforts. U.S. forces utilized 26 ships, 58 helicopters, and 43 fixed wing aircraft in total. The DOD delivered over 18 million pounds of relief supplies and equipment and provided over 400,000 gallons of fresh water and ferried almost 8,000 passengers. In addition, the DOD also treated almost 2,500 patients.[i]

March 2011 – Japan: Tohoku Earthquake and Tsunami (also known as the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami)

Background

On March 11, 2011, a powerful 9.0 magnitude earthquake struck 130 km off the coast of northeast Japan, triggering large tsunami waves, and causing widespread devastation. Tsunami waves reportedly reached as high as 30 meters and inundated some 433,000 square km of land. As a result, 15,891 people were killed and 2,579 people were reported missing. Additionally, 17,000 homes and buildings were destroyed and another 138,000 were damaged. The disaster forced the evacuation of some 492,000

people in total. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), the earthquake was the 4th strongest earthquake worldwide since 1900. Economic damages from the disaster were estimated at US$228 billion."

The earthquake and tsunami also damaged three reactors in the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Plant, triggering a nuclear crisis, resulting in an unprecedented "triple disaster." Damages to the nuclear plant and the subsequent leaking of radioactive material forced the evacuation on March 12 and 13 of more than 700,000 people living within the 20 km exclusion zone created by the Government of Japan (GoJ). Another 136,000 people who lived within 20-30 km of the plant were encouraged by Japanese officials to evacuate or stay inside their homes. The nuclear accident was rated as level 7 on the International Nuclear Events Scale (INES), which was equivalent to that of the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear crisis."

Japan's government and military forces worked quickly to respond to the disaster. By March 19, the Japan Self Defense Forces (JSDF) had deployed 106,200 personnel, 200 rotary aircraft, 322 fixed-wing aircraft, and 60 ships. Additionally, almost all Maritime JSDF (JMSDF) ships were deployed to affected areas. JSDF troops rescued nearly 20,000 individuals in the first week of relief operations and provided relief supplies to some 30,000 displaced. JSDF personnel also supported activities at the nuclear plant.'

The bulk of the foreign military response was provided by the U.S. military; however, Israel provided a medical team comprised of military personnel and China also sent a military SAR team to assist.

Operation Tomodachi ("Friend")

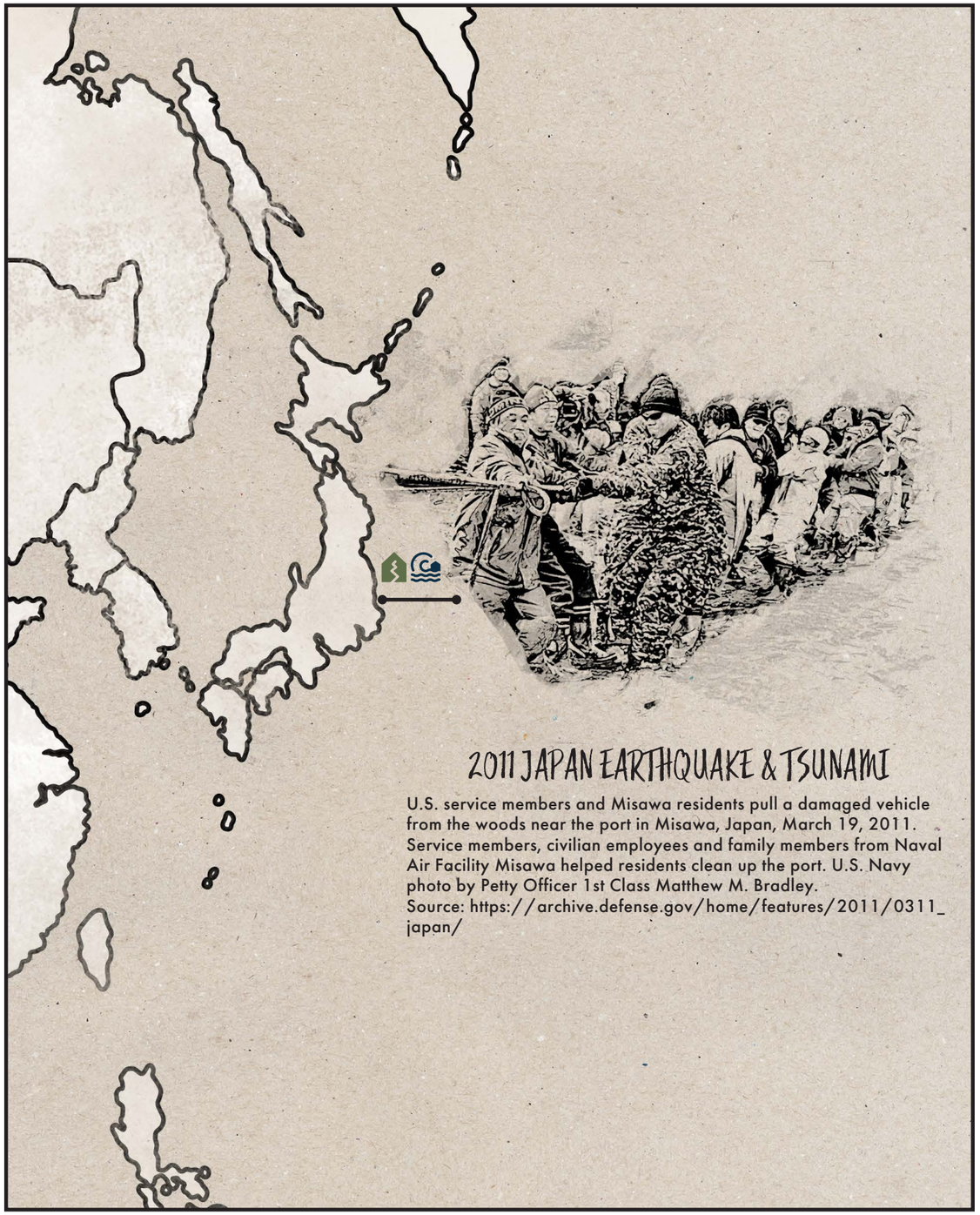
The GoJ initially requested assistance from the U.S. on the evening of March 11. The main request was for SAR teams, military lift to transport supplies and personnel, and DOD, Nuclear Regulatory Commission and Department of Energy nuclear expertise to help with the Fukushima nuclear crisis.

In a March 11, 2011, task order, PACOM designated the Commander, U.S. Forces Japan (USFJ) as the supported operational commander of the operation, and 7th Fleet, Fifth Air Force, U.S. Army Forces Japan (USARJ) and Marine Forces Japan (MARFORJ), designated its own supporting commander for the operation. On March 19, elements of Joint Task Force (JTF)-519 from Pearl Harbor, augmented the staff of USFJ and formed a Joint Support Force (JSF) to take command over the mission.'

The U.S. military effort was named Operation Tomodachi ("Friend"). U.S. Forces were able to coordinate their efforts almost immediately to provide support for Japanese responders because of the large presence of U.S. military personnel in Japan, which included nearly 40,000 U.S. troops from all four services stationed at some 85 facilities in Honshu, Kyushu and Okinawa. U.S. Forces began mobilizing and aiding the day the disaster struck. Military assets in the region were also redirected to the quake zone, including the USS Ronald Reagan Carrier Strike Group which included the USS Chancellorsville, USS Preble, USS Shiloh, and USS Curtis Wilbur.'

JSDF helicopters used U.S. aircraft carriers for the first time in responding to the disaster, with the USS Ronald Reagan providing a platform for air operations as well as a refueling base for JSDF and Coast Guard helicopters. Other U.S. vessels transported JSDF troops and equipment, such as the USS Tortuga, which transported 90 JSDF vehicles and nearly 300 JSDF soldiers. Liaison officers helped with communication between the JSDF and U.S. military forces. For instance, three Marine JMSDF officers served on board the USS Reagan, parallel to three U.S. Navy liaison officers on the Japanese ship, the JS Hyuga. The U.S. airbase at Misawa, located in Aomori prefecture in northeastern Japan, was used as a forward operating base for both U.S. and JSDF forces. U.S. forces train regularly with the JSDF, including humanitarian assistance and disaster relief exercises, and the years of training as well as many interoperable military assets greatly assisted joint response efforts.

On March 12, Commander, Task Force 76 (CTF 76) and 14 staff members deployed as 7th Fleet's maritime response cell (MRC) to USFJ. The MRC was the representative of the joint force maritime



2011 JAPAN EARTHQUAKE & TSUNAMI

U.S. service members and Misawa residents pull a damaged vehicle from the woods near the port in Misawa, Japan, March 19, 2011. Service members, civilian employees and family members from Naval Air Facility Misawa helped residents clean up the port. U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Matthew M. Bradley.
Source: https://archive.defense.gov/home/features/2011/0311_japan/

component commander (JFMCC). The MRC participated in daily coordination meetings, including the Joint Effects Coordination Board where the JSDF, USAID and the components reviewed and validated Mission Tasking Matrix (MITAMS) to task them to the appropriate component. As of March 16, 2011, the U.S. 7th Fleet was operating 19 ships, 140 aircraft, and more than 18,000 personnel in support of the response. A U.S. Navy P-3 Orion was also utilized to perform aerial search missions off the northern coast of Japan.[v]

On March 18, U.S. and Japanese forces began to transition from a search and rescue effort to a relief mission. As of April 1, Pacific Air Forces (PACAF) had conducted 444 sorties, delivering almost 6 million pounds of relief. The Air Force 33rd Rescue Squadron from Kadena Air Base also took part in SAR operations. The Air Force also launched an RQ-4 Global Hawk from Andersen AFB in Guam, and a South Korea–based U-2 to assist with surveillance and assessments. An Air Force special operations team conducted airfield surveys, including at Sendai International Airport, where they also assisted with runway clearing.[v]

The III Marine Expeditionary Force (III MEF) was involved in delivering supplies and clearing access. It also provided radiological surveillance and decontamination at the Fukushima nuclear facility. U.S. Army Japan took part in the assessment effort in Sendai, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Japan District helped with debris clearing.

U.S. troops played a major role in the re-opening of airfields and ports. Sendai's International Airport was under eight feet of water a day after the disaster and appeared to be in complete ruins. An Okinawa-based U.S. Special Operations Group that specialized in establishing forward supply bases began the initial removing of debris, including some of over 5,000 cars that had washed onto the runways. They were later joined by Army Soldiers and Marines. U.S. military personnel helped Japanese forces clear and operationalize Sendai airport within five days of the disaster so that it could serve as an important relief hub. Some 260 Marines also worked side by side with the JSDF and the airport began receiving relief supplies on March 15. As of March 29, troops had cleared more than 2,300 vehicles, delivered 140 drums of kerosene as well as clothing, shoes, blankets and hygiene kits to evacuees. The airport was able to open to commercial flights on April 13. U.S. troops also helped clear the ports of Hachinohe, Miyako, and Oshima. The clearing of the runways and ports allowed for important distribution points for the relief effort.[v]

U.S. Army soldiers from the 35th Combat Support and Sustainment Battalion, along with the 10th Support Group, 83rd Ordnance, 505th Quartermaster Battalion, 1st Battalion, 1st Air Defense Artillery Regiment and the 1st Battalion, 1st Special Forces also served in the operation. The task force, based out of Torii Station, Okinawa, served as a humanitarian logistics hub at Sendai International Airport and provided cargo transload, debris removal, sling-load rigging and delivered toys to affected children.

Operation Pacific Passage

Aside from U.S. military personnel, there was a total of 43,000 U.S. military dependents and 5,000 DOD civilian employees stationed in Japan. Due to concerns over the nuclear crisis, the Air Force became involved with "Operation Pacific Passage," a military-assisted voluntary evacuation operation, which led to the evacuation of some U.S. citizens and their dependents who wished to leave Japan. Initiated a week after the disaster struck, Operation Pacific Passage was a U.S Northern Command (USNORTHCOM)-led operation, and the AMC, 18th Air Force and the 618th Air Operations Center played major roles in the operation. Eligible dependents of U.S. service members and DOD civilians were authorized by the U.S. Department of State to voluntarily depart March 16. In total, 7,322 U.S. military families were evacuated. The families were flown back to AMC bases and airports in the U.S., with the final flight arriving at Travis Air Force Base in California on March 28, 2011.[v]

Nuclear response

The DOD, along with the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and Department of Energy, assisted Japan in dealing with the nuclear crisis. The U.S. military provided specially trained teams as well as airborne systems used to monitor radioactivity and teams on the ground who also monitored radioactivity. Efforts included on-the-ground expertise, decontamination of assets, monitoring of contamination of food and water, aerial detection capability, high-pressure water pumps, fire trucks, and protective gear. The U.S. Navy provided two water barges that provided 500,000 gallons of fresh water for cooling efforts for the damaged reactors. The Marines' Chemical and Biological Incident Response Force (C-BIRF) was deployed to provide training to the JSDF. Global Hawks and U-2 surveillance planes from Okinawa and WC-135 Constant Phoenix aircraft from Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska were used to monitor radiation levels.[v]

The DOD's Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) also provided consequence management and advisory support. A team of 33 personnel from DTRA/SCC-WMD forward-deployed to Yokota Air Base to provide support. This included a Consequence Management Advisory Team (CMAT) which began working with USFJ and the Japanese Ministry of Defense to develop plans to deal with the threat. The forward-deployed team was supported by other DTRA/SCC-WMD team members at Fort Belvoir, Virginia.[v]

Operation Tomodachi began winding down in early April. On April 5, the USS Ronald Reagan Carrier strike group, concluded its support of the mission. The next day, Marines, sailors and soldiers with the Logistics Combat Element, 3rd Marine Expeditionary Brigade ended their participation. On April 7, the Essex Amphibious Ready Group concluded its mission after some three weeks of operations and the 31st MEU departed Oshima Island after providing clean up services. By April 8, all U.S. Navy ships involved in the operation ended their mission and redeployed. The USS Tortuga, USS Safeguard, and USS Essex were the last to leave after the Tortuga and Safeguard presented underwater data on submerged obstructions to local officials in Kessenuma and Oshima.

At the peak of operations, around 24,000 personnel, 189 aircraft, and 24 Navy vessels were involved. U.S. efforts focused on transport of relief supplies and JSDF personnel and equipment, surveillance, and the restoration of critical infrastructure. In addition to immediate relief assistance and support to JSDF, the U.S. military delivered more than two million gallons of water, 189 tons of food, 11,960 gallons of fuel and 100 tons of relief supplies as well as medical assistance, SAR support, and heavy lift assistance.

November 2013 – Philippines: Typhoon Haiyan (locally known as Typhoon Yolanda)

Background

Super Typhoon Haiyan (known locally in the Philippines as Yolanda) made landfall on November 8, 2013, in Guiuan municipality in Eastern Samar province, Philippines. The storm made landfall six times on that day, with wind speeds up to 235 km per hour and gusts up to 275 km per hour. Fourteen million people were affected across nine regions, including 4 million who were displaced. According to UNOCHA, the storm was the deadliest natural disaster in 2013, claiming over 6,000 lives and leaving 28,689 injured. Around 1.1 million houses were also damaged or destroyed.[v]

The storm affected nine out of seventeen regions with Leyte and Samar being the worst affected. Ninety percent of the infrastructure was destroyed in Leyte's largest city, Tacloban City. On November 11, 2013, Philippine President Benigno Aquino declared a state of national calamity.

The AFP mobilized a total of 23,789 personnel to assist with relief efforts. To aid with land transport, the AFP utilized 408 trucks and 141 other vehicles. At sea, the AFP used seven ships, 25 boats, 10 auxiliary boats and 5 reservist boats. Nine fixed wing aircraft, including three C-130 aircraft were used for transport, while 24 helicopters were also utilized for the response.

There were around 57 assisting states, and 29 foreign militaries assisted the Government of the Philippines (GoP) in responding to Typhoon Haiyan. Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, the headquarters of the AFP, located in Quezon City, Manila, was the site of the Multinational Coordination

2013 TYPHOON HAIYAN, PHILIPPINES

U.S. Marine Capt. Joseph White, left, and Philippine Army Pfc. Vic D. Victorlano deliver U.S. Agency for International Development relief supplies in Pasay Luzun, Philippines, Nov. 19, 2013. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Capt. Caleb Eames.
Source: https://archive.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=121188

Center (MNCC). The MNCC, led by the AFP, was used as an information sharing and coordination mechanism between the AFP and assisting foreign militaries to ensure effective collaboration in relief operations. For oversight and coordination between the AFP and the foreign naval vessels, 17 Philippine Liaison Officers (LNO) served as links between the area commander and the foreign military ships.

Operation Damayan

The GoP issued a formal request for assistance to the USG on November 9, 2013. In immediate response, USPACOM directed Marine Corps Forces Pacific (MARFORPAC) to lead military relief operations in the Philippines, with 3d Marine Expeditionary Brigade (3d MEB) serving as the tactical mission commander on the ground and ordered deployment of the aircraft carrier USS George Washington and elements of Carrier Strike Group 5 (CSG 5). The U.S. military relief operation was named "Operation Damayan." The U.S. military focused on large-scale operations utilizing unique capabilities in transport and logistics and was able to respond quickly due to pre-positioned assets throughout the region.

USG relief efforts focused on aerial damage assessments, SAR, and the delivery of food, water and emergency relief supplies for those displaced. The USG, through USAID/OFDA, the DOD, and the U.S. Department of State, provided more than US$143 million to the Philippines for rebuilding.

On November 10, a small group from 3d MEB established a Command Operations Center (COC) at Villamor Airbase, which is the headquarters of the Philippine Air Force located in the capital of the country, Manila. The group immediately began to coordinate with the AFP, Joint U.S. Military Assistance Group (JUSMAG-P) and USAID/OFDA, serving as the lead federal agency for USG relief efforts.

A USPACOM Deployable Joint Task Force Augmentation Cell (DJTFAC) also immediately deployed and played a major role in establishing an operational joint headquarters. The group provided joint expertise and detailed knowledge of PACOM organization and processes and helped pave the way for the establishment of the JTF.

Also on November 10, the Joint Special Operations Task-Force Philippines (JSOTF-P) located in Mindanao, began conducting surveillance to assess airfields, ports, routes, and distress signals, and obtaining information critical for SAR operations in the affected areas of Leyte, Samar, and the Western Visayas. JSOTF-P performs an advisory role to Philippine Security Forces in the Southern Philippines and sent some of the first U.S. military personnel to respond to the disaster.

Villamor airfield was used as the central hub to deliver relief supplies to the affected areas of Tacloban, Guiuan, Borongan and Ormoc in Leyte and Samar. The first shipment of U.S. relief supplies arrived on November 12 and U.S. forces began distribution on November 13. The USS George Washington and CSG5 began relief operations on November 14.

On November 16, PACOM ordered the activation of JTF-505 to lead the tactical mission, replacing the team from the 3d MEB. Lieutenant General John E. Wissler, Commander, III MEF, assumed command of JTF-505, which established operations on November 18. JTF-505 reached full operational capability on November 20.

Eight days after the storm made landfall, a joint DOD-USAID-UNICEF team helped rebuild Tacloban's municipal water system reaching some 250,000 people. DOD aircraft also performed needs and damage assessments with USAID/OFDA staff. Missions were cleared in Manila by the USAID/OFDA MITAM.

JTF-505 and USAID/OFDA recognized that the emergency phase of relief operations for Haiyan terminated on or about November 26. So, the U.S. military ceased major operations on November 26 and JTF-505 was disestablished on December 1. The U.S. Embassy in the Philippines noted that key to the fast bilateral teamwork between the AFP and the U.S. military was the Visiting Forces Agreement between the two countries.

Military efforts included more than 13,400 military troops, 66 aircraft, and 12 naval ships. In total, the U.S. delivered 2,495 tons of relief, and evacuated over 21,000 people. Additionally, the U.S. military helped ferry some 1,200 relief workers into Tacloban. More than 1,300 flights were completed to some

450 sites.

April 2015 – Nepal: Earthquake (also known as the Gorkha Earthquake)

Background

On April 25, 2015, a powerful 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck Nepal, leaving over 8,700 people dead, over 21,000 injured and destroying over 600,000 houses. The epicenter was in Gorkha district, around 81 km (50 miles) northwest of the capital, Kathmandu, with a depth of 15 km (9.3 miles). The quake affected 22 out of 75 districts in the country, including Kathmandu. On May 12, another strong 7.3 magnitude aftershock struck near Chilankha village in Dolakha District, causing additional damages and leaving at least another 150 people dead. Out of the country's 22 affected districts, the Government of Nepal (GoN) classified 14 districts as being severely affected and in need of urgent assistance.

Because of the extent of the damage, the GoN requested international assistance, including foreign military assets (FMA). Along with the international humanitarian community and 34 assisting nations, at least 18 foreign militaries helped respond to the earthquake. The military forces added additional response capabilities to the Nepalese-led effort, particularly in the areas of SAR, medical assistance, airlift, and engineering support.

As part of Nepal's overall relief efforts, the Nepalese Army (NA) played a significant role in the disaster response. The NA's response operation was called "Operation Sankat Mochan" ("Liberation from Crisis"). Other government security forces, including Nepal's Armed Police Force and the Nepal Police, also served as primary responders. Although NA personnel were affected by the earthquake themselves, 66,069 members, or some 90% of troops, were quickly mobilized to assist with relief efforts.[1]

In an effort to communicate and coordinate with the various foreign military elements on the ground, the NA established the Multi-National Military Coordination Center (MNMCC) in NA headquarters. Rescue operations were assisted through support teams from 34 countries, which included the 18 military as well as 16 non-military teams. A total of 4,316 foreign military personnel from various SAR, Engineering, Medical and Aviation teams assisted the operation.

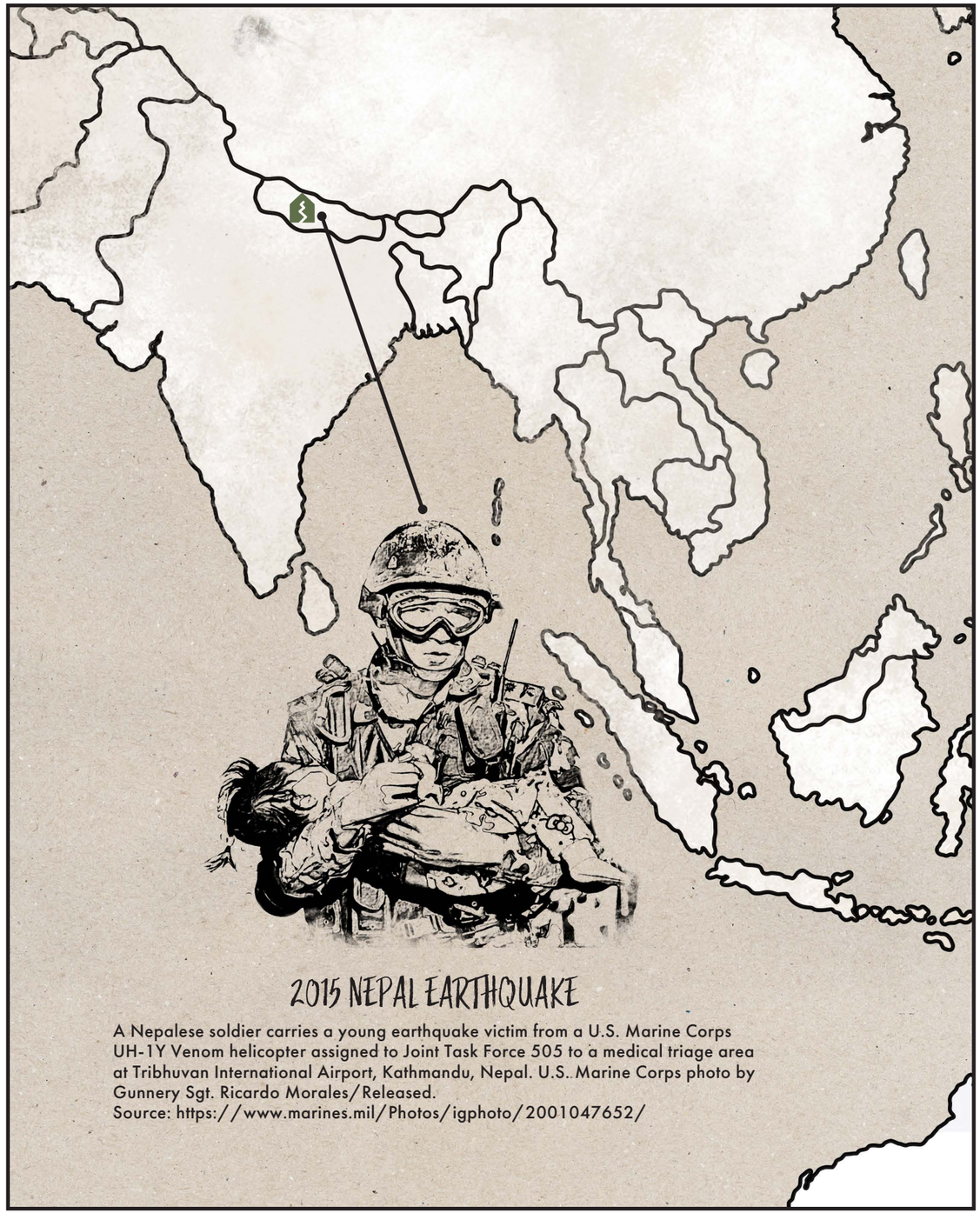
The international teams provided rescue assistance, medical treatment to 27,390 people, evacuated 3,493 people and delivered 966 tons of relief under close coordination with the NA. Foreign military assets included 23 helicopters, including 13 from India, 3 from China and 7 from the U.S. A total of 966 tons of relief materials were delivered by foreign aircraft and 27,390 people were treated by foreign military medical teams. The foreign SAR teams rescued 19 survivors. All the multinational force personnel returned home by June 4, 2015.[2]

Operation Sahayogi Haat ("Helping Hand")

The U.S. military operation under USPACOM was called "Operation Sahayogi Haat" ("Helping Hands"). The U.S. Embassy in Nepal headed the U.S. effort, with USAID/OFDA as the lead federal agency for the response. With U.S. military assistance, USAID/OFDA sent a 125-person Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) team which included two Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) teams, which arrived via U.S. Air Force C-17 cargo aircraft on April 28. A DART is a forward-deployable team that coordinates and manages the USG response in a disaster-affected country. The two USAR teams were from Los Angeles County, California, and Fairfax County, Virginia. In addition to working in close coordination with the GoN, the U.S. military continued to work closely with USAID/OFDA and in close coordination with the DART.[3]

A U.S military Special Forces team was on the ground in Nepal for a training exercise when the earthquake struck and quickly transitioned to begin supporting disaster relief, including medical assistance to the injured. The soldiers also provided logistical help and helped in SAR along popular trekking routes, including the Mount Everest Base Camp.

Other forms of early support from USPACOM included the deployment of a Joint Humanitarian Assessment Survey Team (JHAST) with approximately 20 military personnel from Kadena AFB



2015 NEPAL EARTHQUAKE

A Nepalese soldier carries a young earthquake victim from a U.S. Marine Corps UH-1Y Venom helicopter assigned to Joint Task Force 505 to a medical triage area at Tribhuvan International Airport, Kathmandu, Nepal. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Gunnery Sgt. Ricardo Morales/Released.
Source: https://www.marines.mil/Photos/igphoto/2001047652/

Okinawa, which arrived on April 29 to work with the DART team to carry out coordinated assessments. A JHAST team offers expertise in communications, intelligence, medical, logistics planning, public affairs, aviation, ordnance, contracting, operations, protection, engineering, military police, and chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear situations.

During relief operations, the JHAST advised the DART on DOD capabilities and assets available to support the response and helped assess appropriate DOD missions. Additionally, both the JHAST and DART conducted joint assessments, including focusing on airport operations at Kathmandu's Tribhuvan International Airport (TIA). The team also helped coordinate the response to USAID/OFDA validated requests from the GoN in coordination with the U.S. Embassy. The JHAST was led by Marine Brig. Gen. Paul Kennedy, Commander of 3rd Marine Expeditionary Brigade (3rd MEB).

On May 1, Marine Corps Forces, Pacific (MARFORPAC) was directed by USPACOM to activate JTF 505 and assume operational responsibilities as the U.S. supported commander in Nepal. U.S. Navy Adm. Samuel J. Locklear III, commander of USPACOM, designated Marine Corps Lt. Gen. John Wissler, commanding general of III MEF, as the JTF commander. U.S. Air Force Brig. Gen. Michael Minihan, was the JTF 505 Joint Air Component Coordination Element commander.[i]

JTF 505's forward headquarters in Nepal coordinated U.S. military relief efforts. JTF 505 Forward consisted of approximately 300 U.S. military personnel on the ground in Nepal, while JTF 505 Main in Okinawa, Japan, and an Intermediate Staging Base (ISB) in Thailand consisted of approximately 590 U.S. military personnel. The JTF began to work closely with U.S. agencies to coordinate the USG response to requests by the GoN soon after it was activated. The JTF also began working with the MNMCC regarding prioritization of humanitarian supplies and delivery to affected areas.

The JTF initially supported ongoing disaster relief operations with a U.S. Air Force contingency response group (CRG), three Marine Corps UH-1Y Huey helicopters, four Marine Corps MV-22 Osprey tilt-rotor aircraft, four Air Force C-17 Globemaster III transports and two Marine Corps KC-130 Hercules aircraft, as well as various ground and aviation command and control capabilities.

The U.S. military deployed the 36th CRG, a rapid-deployment unit with the capability of securing, operating and managing an airfield, to Kathmandu on May 5. The 42-person team, attached to JTF 505, was based out of Guam. The CRG was comprised of airmen along with security forces and medics. As one of its first tasks, the 36th CRG and members of the Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal teamed up to conduct an assessment and necessary repairs to TIA.

In support of the operation, and to ensure the flow of relief and personnel to and from Nepal, the JTF helped set up an ISB at U-Tapao Airfield in Thailand. At the ISB, JTF personnel monitored communications with other JTF 505 components throughout the region and supported air operations. The JTF mission in Thailand was able to successfully move tons of cargo and hundreds of support personnel into Nepal. Additionally, Royal Thai Armed Forces worked with the JTF at the ISB to coordinate relief support with the Government of Thailand.

Tragically, on May 12, six Marines and two Nepalese soldiers lost their lives during a helicopter accident during ongoing relief operations to isolated villages in the Himalayas. Four of the U.S. service members were part of Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 469 and the other two were members of Marine Corps Installations Pacific Combat Camera.

JTF 505 began drawing down its relief operations as the Nepalese government and international aid agencies began pivoting towards long-term recovery and reconstruction efforts. Other foreign militaries had begun redeploying home starting around May 9. As part of redeployment efforts, the JTF 505 transitioned CRG tasks to the Nepalese civil aviation authority and other international organizations, including training Nepal Airlines employees and NA personnel. Nepal announced its transition from relief operations to the recovery phase of disaster response on May 21, 2015.

JTF 505 deactivated on May 26 after redeploying from Nepal to U-Tapao. About 900 U.S. military and civilian personnel from all services contributed to the relief efforts under JTF 505. During its deployment, JTF 505 worked with 24 different countries to provide relief. In coordination with the GoN and USAID, the JTF delivered about 120 tons of relief supplies. The task force also transported 553 personnel and conducted 69 casualty evacuations. JTF 505 unique capabilities included the contribution of three Marine Corps UH-1Y Huey helicopters and four Marine Corps MV-22B Osprey tilt rotor aircraft to the relief effort. Additionally, four Air Force C-17 Globemaster IIIs, four Air Force C-130 Hercules and four Marine Corps KC-130J Hercules aircraft, as well as various ground and aviation command and control assets were utilized."

Conclusion

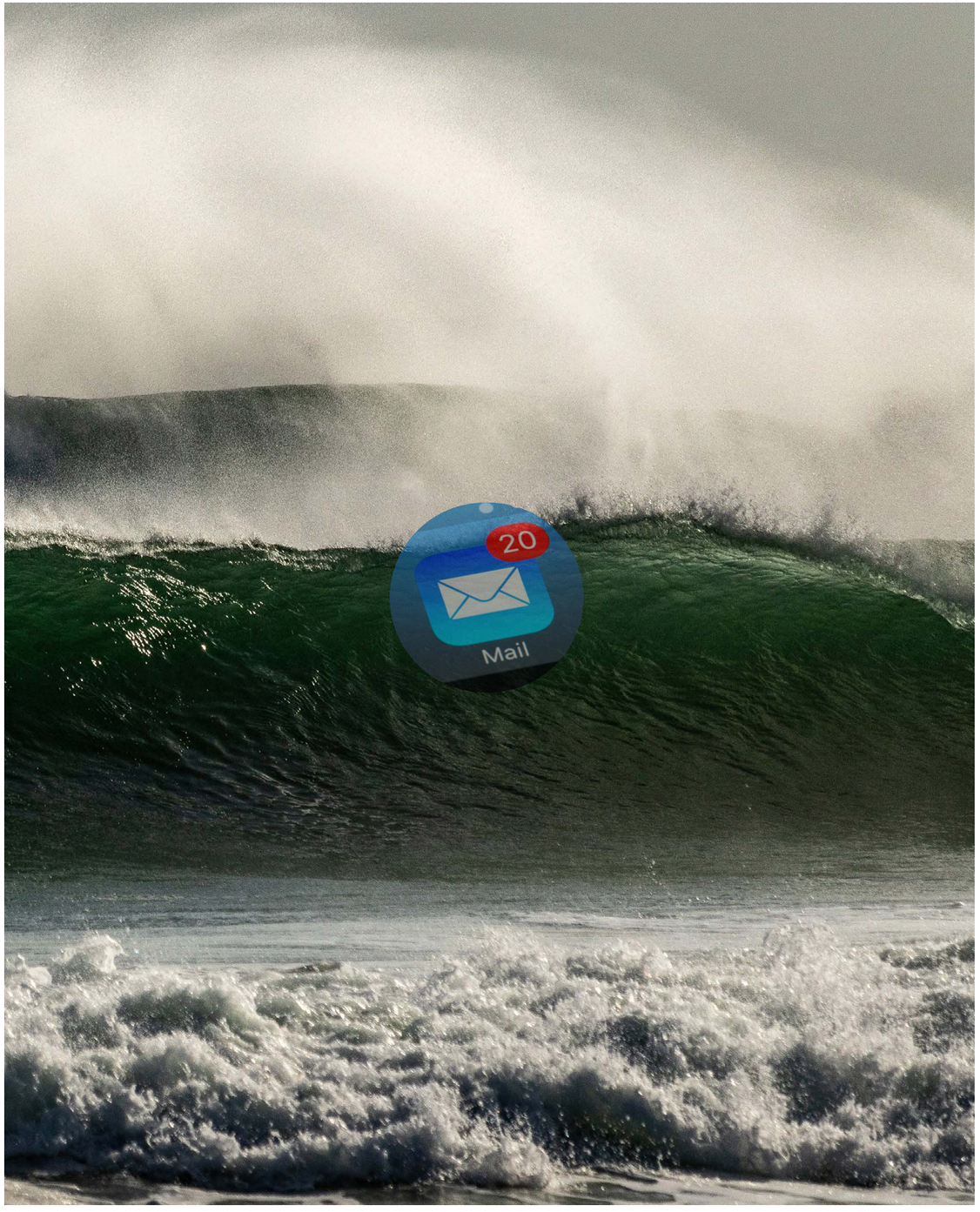
Due to the frequent and diverse natural hazard risks and humanitarian emergencies faced by countries across the Indo-Pacific, regional humanitarian and military responders are expected to continue to be challenged by future disaster response missions. Although civil-military coordination and response efforts have improved over the years, added layers of risk due to climate change and the potential for future pandemics to alter international response efforts will require regional militaries, including U.S. forces, to continue to be an integral part of the disaster response landscape. The inherent, unique capabilities of Indo-Pacific militaries will continue to be called upon to support disaster response missions throughout the region.

Climate change has serious implications for national security and will continue to worsen the effects of natural hazards such as tropical cyclones and increase the threat of other hazards such as sea level rise, which in turn will exacerbate other natural hazards such as storm surge and cause devastating effects upon the region. According to the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), "the impact and magnitude of disasters, over the past decade, indicate that climate change is making natural hazards even more frequent and intense…" Furthermore, "risks in existing disaster hotspots are forecasted to intensify, and new disaster hotspots will begin to appear. A riskscape of complex, compound and cascading disasters is emerging." More recently, the COVID-19 pandemic has also challenged humanitarian and military responders, precipitating a rethinking and revamping of how civil-military relief operations are prepared and executed.

As disaster relief is a core capability of the U.S. Department of Defense, alongside the region's militaries and civilian responders, U.S. military forces will continue to provide unique capabilities and support for foreign disaster relief and humanitarian assistance missions in the Indo-Pacific. The expansion of risks from climate change compounded by the possible threat of future pandemics will necessitate more thoughtful preparation and response efforts from civilian and military actors in the Indo-Pacific.

Note: Parts of this article have been excerpted and republished with permission from the publication: USINDOPACOM Foreign Disaster Response in the Indo-Pacific June 1991 – June 2019. Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance. The original volume in its entirety may be found at: https://www.cfe-dmha.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=pPgPtXpbr3Y%3d&portalid=0

You Can't Just Send Emails during a Crisis!



By Leigh A. Sholler

Information sharing supports humanitarian operations; it promotes an affected community's recovery, and sharing information with local actors must be an intentional part of military and civilian plans for humanitarian assistance and disaster response.

This article highlights information sharing practices and considerations that support locally-led disaster risk reduction and humanitarian activities. The desire to ensure that humanitarian actors at all levels of the community have access to information and tools to create, analyze, and integrate data is crucial as information will remain a key commodity in ensuring reductions in loss and suffering. Having more representatives of local and indigenous communities at the table may lead to higher quality information being shared among stakeholders, and there is a need to further elaborate strategies and programs to integrate these local partners to confront existing and future climate change-influenced hazards.

Introduction

As a member of the Association of Pacific Rim Universities (APRU) Multi-Hazards Working Group, the Applied Research and Information Sharing (ARIS) Branch of the Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (CFE-DM) was invited to contribute a chapter to a textbook on the subject of "The All-hazards Approach: Towards Resilience Building," forthcoming from Springer Nature and edited by Professor Takako Izumi and her colleagues in. In addition to participating in Asia-Pacific regional scholarly knowledge production, the invitation allowed ARIS to explore some pressing questions in disaster management – i.e., how can information sharing promote local leadership and ownership of disaster risk reduction (DRR), climate change adaptation (CCA), and humanitarian assistance and disaster response (HA/DR). My ARIS colleagues – Alan Aoki, Dr. Michelle Ibanez, and Dr. Alberto Morales Jr. – and I developed the paper, "Information Sharing to Build Localization into All-Hazards Approaches to HA/DR" to contribute to how scholars, policymakers, and practitioners think about information and its meaning for communities undertaking DRR, CCA, or disaster response actions.

In addition to a literature review, this study involved interviews with 11 experts and practitioners at various levels of the humanitarian community – international, regional, national, and local. The conclusions build on work conducted by other actors in this space in hopes of strengthening civilian and military actors' commitment to information sharing before, during, and after disasters in the expectation that better informed local communities can take more ownership of risk reduction, adaptation, and inclusion projects that build their own resilience in the face of climate change-influenced hazards. Indeed, one of the key arguments of this study is that relationships and trust built among stakeholders in the DRR and CCA realms will allow more effective and efficient information sharing during an HA/DR mission. There is significant scope to extend this research into evolving information systems and practices, and the foundations laid out over the past 30 years will have implications for how the community of disaster management stakeholders meets the challenges to come.

Background

Literature Review

Although 30 years have elapsed since localization became an explicit driving concept in disaster management, information sharing is among the aspects of localization that remain unelaborated. Difficulties remain in ensuring that international, regional, and national preparedness and response agents share information and resources with local stakeholders. This sharing is crucial to ensure that communities possess the necessary resources to fortify their resilience in the face of multiple, evolving hazards. The need for inclusion and empowerment of national and local actors in HA/DR has been recognized by

Meulaboh, Sumatra, Indonesia - Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCAC) vehicles, assigned to USS Bonhomme Richard (LHD 6) and Expeditionary Strike Group Five (ESG-5), deliver needed materials and supplies to the citizens in the city of Meulaboh, on the island of Sumatra, Indonesia. The LCACs are capable of transporting more supplies than helicopters in a single trip. The Bonhomme Richard Expeditionary Strike Group is currently operating in the Indian Ocean off the waters of Indonesia and Thailand in support of Operation Unified Assistance, the humanitarian operation effort in the wake of the Tsunami that struck South East Asia. USN/Bart A. Bauer

international humanitarian organizations and donors who have committed to international strategic initiatives for increased localization. Yet, change on the ground remains slow for various reasons, including that there are varying definitions of localization.

In 1994, attendees of the First World Conference on Natural Disasters, held in Yokohama, Japan, endorsed the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action for a Safer World, which affirmed the importance of community participation in risk mitigation and projects to reduce the impacts of natural disasters. By the time the 2004 Indian Ocean ("Boxing Day") Tsunami struck, academics, policymakers, and humanitarian organizations had begun to try to understand how affected communities could be supported before, during, and after disaster not only because of the role they physically play but also because of the role their knowledge can

"...academics, policymakers, and humanitarian organizations had begun to try to understand how affected communities could be supported before, during, and after disaster not only because of the role they physically play but also because of the role their knowledge can play."

Fagradalsfjal volcanic eruption in Iceland, 2021. Tetiana Grypachevska

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Emergency Operations Center (EOC) staff is hard at work keeping Americans safe 24/7. In response to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak, the EOC has sent teams to help with clinical management, contact tracing, and communications.
CDC/James Gathany

play. After-action reviews of responses to the 2004 tsunami concluded that some adverse outcomes could have been avoided if national, regional, and global stakeholders had not only sought local information but had also integrated local actors (community leaders, civil society organizations, etc.) into planning and preparedness activities. Also in the wake of the tsunami, the development of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) sketched out a 10-year blueprint (2005-2015) for DRR that involved building institutions, identifying and assessing risk, enhancing early warning, building a "culture" of safety and resilience, and reducing underlying risk. HFA came up for reconsideration as 2015 drew near and stakeholders began to craft the "post-2015" DRR agenda. In its preparatory review for the 2015 Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) consulted with countries and other stakeholders to gauge progress on the HFA priorities and to assess appetite for a follow-on or revamped DRR program. Among the conclusions of the consultation was that the post-2015 framework had to retain a focus on local action, which UNISDR defined as well-resourced and well-supported local governments, community engagements, and community ownership of effort.

When the United Nations General Assembly endorsed the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, it attempted to refocus DRR on state-centered action with consultation among and buy-in from local governments, the private sector, and others. However, none of the four Sendai Framework Priorities centered local actors. In something of a backlash against this apparent shortcoming, a significant shift in how to conceive of local control of disaster management, humanitarian action, and other related activity erupted in 2016. The Grand Bargain, launched during the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul, Turkey, in May 2016, brought some of the world's largest donors and humanitarian organizations together in a commitment to get more resources into the hands of people who are at risk or in need as a way to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian action. In 2021, the Grand Bargain signatories agreed that the process needed to evolve, and they endorsed the framework of the Grand Bargain 2.0 of which one workstream is that greater support be provided for the "leadership, delivery, and capacity of local responders and the participation of affected communities in addressing humanitarian needs." This revival of the Grand Bargain responded to criticism that international donors and organizations were focused primarily on funding local implementation of internationally-planned projects, and it was deemed crucial that these major players plan for and encourage local leadership and participation at all stages of development, DRR, and HA/DR actions.

Among United Nations Office of Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) projects aimed at bridging gaps in the information sphere between local and top-down humanitarian action, DRR, and CCA, is the "Words into Action" series, which advocates for best practice in localization. In 2019, the UNDRR stated that community involvement is not only about tapping local knowledge and resources, but it is also about understanding how communities make choices according to their opportunities and constraints. The most recent focus has been on including traditional knowledge to bolster the sustainability of DRR at local levels because interventions that integrate local knowledge are more likely to be sustainable.

There were early indications that the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic may have stimulated change within the global humanitarian, DRR, and CCA communities that other efforts – e.g., the Grand Bargain – had not. With international donors and actors limited in where they could travel for the better part of two years, local action became conspicuously the norm globally rather than the exception. Funding and supplies moved globally without a robust human accompaniment while capacity building and information sharing occurred remotely in an example of how things could be in a post-COVID world if stakeholders remained committed to building trusting partnerships upon which they will rely in both future crisis and during preparedness and risk reduction projects. Alas, the 2022 State of the Humanitarian System (SOHS) report revealed that humanitarian stakeholders' pandemic experiences were not entirely rosy. Remote, international management and decision-making remained the rule while local implementing partners were expected to overcome mobility and communication challenges, and to accept all the risks of failure without any opportunity for driving strategy, planning, or resources. The upshot was a palpable loss of trust between local organizations and their target communities as well as between local implementers and international or regional organizations. The SOHS particularly pointed out that local actors were unable to combat pandemic-related and general misinformation because of limits imposed on both their use of international donor funding and their movement among target communities. What is more, the SOHS found that the pandemic may have exacerbated rather than alleviated the seemingly inherent power imbalance in the relationship between humanitarians and the people they serve, who may be both local implementing partners as well as disaster-affected people. This imbalance stems from the fact that humanitarians participate in the relationship by choice whereas necessity or circumstance presses affected communities into it.

"Localizing" humanitarian action within this context would seem absolutely necessary, but the process itself remains fraught as pandemic-pressured international donors and organizations appear to only accept local actors who model Western-dominated values and frameworks because that nominally shows that locals can be trusted with data and funding. If international agencies "localize" without devolving power and resources to local communities, few changes to decision-making and planning will emerge. If, instead, other models of localization can be adopted and implemented, then all-hazards preparedness and HA/DR missions can be more effective.

Interview Findings

The research team conducted semi-structured interviews with 11 subject matter experts who work in the humanitarian and development sectors. Purposive sampling was used to identify interviewees. The pool of candidates was the community of HA/DR stakeholders to include the private sector; government; international, national, and local non-governmental organizations (NGO); academia; and inter-governmental regional centers. From a potential pool of twenty-five humanitarian practitioners invited to participate in the interview process, a total

of 11 individuals from 8 organizations did sit for interviews. The interviewees have been working in the sector for between four and 30 years. While the greater part of the interviewees currently work at senior leadership levels, many of them have extensive fieldwork experience in disaster response, mitigation, information sharing, and capacity building, with most still deploying in response to humanitarian emergencies. Their combined fieldwork experience covers Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Europe, and the Pacific Islands. To secure their anonymity, interviewees' names are not used.

Interviewees have experienced the successes and failures of the drive to "localize." When asked to focus on the information aspects of localization, they were keen to discuss the ways in which data and information flow – or do not flow – during humanitarian operations as well as in pre- and post-disaster planning and review periods. There are optimists, who expect local and national disaster response capacity to strengthen in the coming years to the point that international and regional organizations see requests for relief resources decline because national resources and expertise are sufficient; in this conception, international and regional organizations' roles will be coordinating or serving as knowledge hubs. There are pessimists, who see localization as a "fancy" international concept or who suggest that the Grand Bargain was made "about the global South" rather than "with" local partners. And there are realists, who caution against localizing "for localization's sake" and insist that international organizations must find locals "that share our principles and standards." Given the variety of ways that "localization" is described and the fact that climate change-influenced hazards are causing and will continue to cause more intense disasters, further debate about resources, expertise, standards, and tools will remain fraught. Nonetheless, the desire to ensure that humanitarian actors at all levels of the community have access to information and the tools to create, analyze, and use it appears to be a point of agreement.

Generally, practitioners interviewed agreed that "localization" means that local leadership and resources are used to address problems within a community. However, "local" actors may view it both as an international concept that seeks to implement outside ideas (standards) within a local context and as facilitating the strengthening of actors who have not historically had a voice. On the issue of data and information sharing, national/local actors expressed a sense that local communities and organizations feel mistrusted by international agencies. At the same time, international respondents expressed a sense that the opposite was also likely true – that local populations needed to be convinced that they could trust the international community. The international humanitarian community appears keenly aware of the fact that there is a trust deficit between international responders and local responders and populations; they are, thus, highly cognizant of the fact that the international humanitarian community needs to work to decrease this divide. One practitioner who works in an international organization brought up the importance of reciprocity in building trust: "A lot of problems come from the fact that we ask for a lot of information and many times do not give anything back; our goal is to make sure if we get information, what are our partners getting out of it… the goal is not just taking but to give back and listen to partners … make sure you give back."

The challenges inherent in not only accessing but also integrating and valuing local information were constantly apparent in the way that interviewees addressed any perceived or actual differences between "modern" scientific or technical information and local, indigenous, or traditional knowledge. While some organizations explicitly seek to "uplift indigenous knowledge," others – perhaps in a reflection of their societies – expect information to be vetted for applicability or accuracy at the highest levels before being shared. Nonetheless, 11 of 11 interviewees ascribed to the importance of both scientific/technical and local/indigenous information. But there were significant differences in the way they addressed the issue of using or valuing local information. The responses ranged from somewhat anodyne considerations of how different types of "data" could be integrated for analysis and processing to a more substantive demand that indigenous knowledge be "reviewed scientifically" to an outright commitment to "data justice" that ensures that "local problems [have] local solutions." Two attitudes became evident: 1) local knowledge is valid because it is put in practice; and 2) local knowledge needs to be validated by scientific method.

Interviewees expressed the depth of the challenge they felt in ensuring that even if local knowledge was not "compatible" in form with data standards, it could be complementary. Moreover, several respondents from within the information management (IM) / information technology (IT) professions highlighted that on-the-ground teams do not discount any seemingly accurate information – local or scientific – if it will save lives. Several interviewees expressed confidence that "speaking the same language" in terms of data parameters, appearance, and access to platforms will level the playing field, and one IM professional with an international organization, said, "tools depend on context, but we try to be flexible to whatever is most popular in [the space where we are working]." Of the three IM and IT professionals among the interviewee group, all underscored that IM teams and working groups are very flexible and adapt to whatever the disaster preparedness or response requires, including using whatever platforms a local population is using. But placing just a wholesale value on information and ensuring its availability to stakeholders in a response is not entirely without challenges. One practitioner pointed out that the ability of humanitarian response practitioners and affected communities to deliver data and information from the ground via mobile devices has actually made it more difficult to reconcile vast amounts of data that sometimes run contrary to an official version of events. That interviewee said, "It seems the volume of information is not the problem; we have inflation of information; to discern meaningful information is the challenge. We are swimming in information, but we don't know the truth." This view was echoed by others, who advocated thinking more critically about what information is needed, "what is essential information, what is desirable, and then, what is not needed" and "being very selective" about what comes from their organizations' official channels. Moreover, there are attitudinal and legal obstacles that stop some organizations from reaching counterparts in other levels of action to gather and share information. At the international and regional level, these obstacles are most often legal – e.g., laws or agreed-upon procedures that limit external players' access to local groups beyond national governments. In the other direction, some NGOs may restrict information they share because it is their "bread and butter" or could impact their funding "and they get protective." Finally, several respondents underscored that international organizations also restrict information sharing on the basis of "sensitivity" of information to keep from exposing "individuals' identifiable information" to risk if it leaks into the public sphere.

The reality of disaster response is that no organization works alone. Those interviewees who are part of an organization that deploys personnel to the field to support emergency operations said, in various ways, that integrating other stakeholders is "what we do." All interviewees agreed that sharing most types of information at all times improves coordination, effectiveness, and efficiency. However, the practical aspects of sharing information and ensuring it reaches all stakeholders cannot be forgotten. Interviewees built on two separate issues on this score: policy and platform.

On the issue of policies or guidelines related to information sharing, some organizations have strong policies and rules for collecting and disseminating information, including the use of well-established tools, while others do it in an ad hoc manner. Three respondents pointed to formal and specific institutional projects ranging from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) work program and Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) guidelines to internal guidelines and checklists governing IM. Indeed, one practitioner underscored the "lengthy consultation with stakeholders" that went into regional programs for information gaps, challenges, and opportunities. At the other end of the spectrum, some organizations handle information flows in an entirely organic manner or based on the demands of their partners or host agencies. One practitioner said, "We do the best we can… to be honest, we have not gotten that sophisticated; we don't have an SOP [standard oper-

ating procedure]."

On the issue of platforms, interviewees all mentioned that their organizations and partners at the international, regional, national, and local levels use a variety of databases, software, and apps to manage and share information. However, as one interviewee exclaimed, "In time of crisis, you cannot just send emails!" There does appear to be a difference between local use of digital platforms – especially WhatsApp – and international players' ability to rely on IT department-hosted tools and processes. This divide also appears to be reflected at the practical level where international-level staff and academics said meetings – in person and virtual – were absolutely unavoidable in humanitarian emergency contexts and, therefore, required IT department support. Indeed, one laughingly reiterated the stereotype that "OCHA [the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs] is a synonym for meetings" and that points to how humanitarian responses are coordinated under formal structures. Nonetheless, this digital sophistication among international or regional players is not absent at local levels. IM and IT professionals among interviewees emphasized that international IM teams are flexible and adapt to whatever the local population is using and that their respective agencies use common software and apps that can integrate or be shared with stakeholders outside their organizations. Indeed, all interviewees working in the international, regional, or academic spheres said that communication with external partners uses common tools – e.g., email, WhatsApp, social media, or even hard copy. Two outliers pointed out that information in their organizations is ideally shared internally and externally through face-to-face encounters facilitated by the presence of staff in target communities.

So, what did the COVID-19 pandemic do to information sharing in the humanitarian and DRR worlds?

Some organizations "re-thought" processes when faced with the information sharing challenges of the pandemic, both on a technological level (e.g., how to effectively exchange information in areas of the Pacific with low bandwidth) and in terms of how and what type of information was necessary to share. One confessed, "[The pandemic] …did make us ask how to share information; there was so much information; you had to set up platforms for information access; the problem with 'in the sky' platforms is … you might not have the bandwidth to access it; so, you had to try to email it or share hard copies in outlying areas – if you are allowed in those areas."

Across all interviewees, there was agreement that a key impact of the pandemic on HA/DR was a shift of response activities to the national and local levels. One respondent pointed out that "rapid needs and damage assessments were done locally," and another underscored that their local organization helped "prove the need" that resulted in the activation of formal government emergency management structures as even national governments could not send people, and "without external human resources in local areas, [locals] could do the job." There was no choice for most organizations but to "localize" in all respondents' views. What is more, however movement restrictions impacted their physical work, for all interviewees, there were changes in communication styles and methods based on both technology and new-found flexibility in time, formality, and hierarchies. All interviewees noted that pandemic era reliance on virtual (online) communication had benefits and drawbacks. Positive impacts ranged from lessened expenses to the opportunity for more people to participate in discussions surrounding humanitarian response. At the same time, negative impacts ranged from exclusion of people without sufficient internet bandwidth to increased pressure on practitioners to give more of their time because it was easier to connect. Swift adoption of IT-based platforms meant more information but less time for analysis, and a lack of face-to-face interaction lessened the "human" side of humanitarian action. Three interviewees pointed out that in those areas of the world, particularly Pacific Island Countries, where there is both a cultural demand for face-to-face interaction and a technological shortfall that disrupts virtual communication, people switched back quickly when movement restrictions ended.

Despite some positive outcomes, several interviewees reflected on the intersection of the COVID-19 pandemic and the localization strategy. Practically, it was seen as a "push for localization to be not just a buzzword" and to "source beyond the international humanitarian community to local non-humanitarians who have become humanitarians out of need." Indeed, one practitioner pointed out that while the United Nations system was "working out [how to use Microsoft] Teams," NGOs already had local actors with whom they had long engaged, and they took on the work. But others lamented the "accidental" or "last resort" nature of the move to rely on local actors for humanitarian action under pandemic restrictions. While people in the technology sector may have celebrated that years of their work to connect people online had paid off, for actual control of resources, planning, and information, the pandemic was more of an externality that demonstrated the shortfalls of previous "localization" projects.

Recommendations

By speaking with practitioners and experts from the global humanitarian community, our study sought to tease out practices and considerations that promote information sharing before, during, and after HA/DR operations. In particular, we sought to understand how to ensure that local stakeholders' knowledge, needs, and skills in information gathering, analysis, and dissemination could be promoted as part of a reinvigorated push to "localize" humanitarian action across all types of disasters.

Our findings indicate broad acceptance of the need for local actors to have a voice in determining the shape and leadership of humanitarian responses and DRR activities that impact them. All respondents agreed that all stakeholders in a humanitarian response require access to timely, accurate, and actionable information. However, there are diverse views among interviewees on how to make progress toward local leadership and how to ensure that stakeholders build relationships of trust within the humanitarian community to ensure that information flows from international to local and vice versa. Our questions to the interviewees sought to bring to light the elements that either promote or hinder informa-

CFE-DM and the United States Coast Guard (USCG) led a HA/DR workshop in Papua New Guinea (PNG), 9 to 13 October 2023 at the Kumul Leadership Centre in Port Moresby. This workshop was executed as a part of Pacific Partnership 2023 in collaboration with the Papua New Guinea Defence Force (PNGDF), Ministry of Provincial and Local-Government Affairs, and the PNG National Disaster Management Office and National Disaster Centre. DoD

tion sharing among the various levels of humanitarian action. In the end, interviewees' comments began to sketch out several ways in which the humanitarian community can begin to practice more fluid information sharing before, during, and after a disaster and, therefore, how information sharing and the relationships that underpin it promote an approach to DRR that allows communities to build resilience to all types of hazards.

Interviews showed that modern communications technology has had a significant impact on how information flows. However, interviewees' responses also revealed a spectrum of positive, neutral, and negative impacts due to attitudes, policies, languages, and tools that differ among the various levels of assisting and affected entities. By ensuring that stakeholders take into consideration these aspects of communication in preparedness, implementation, and after-action review, they can make progress toward one of the goals of the post-2015 DRR agenda: well-resourced and well-supported local, community ownership of disaster management efforts. Indeed, interviewees' views seem to bear out Kelman's suggestion that as local communities begin to recognize that they are being relied upon to bear the costs of both losses and non-structural disaster management interventions, they will become louder about rejecting the centering of international and national agents in the DRR process. Given this context, we have four recommendations to impel the broad disaster management community toward ensuring good data and information get to the people who need it – both local communities dealing with response efforts and the international community supporting those efforts.

1. Build trust by ensuring two-way communication and including local actors as equal partners
2. Continuously advocate sharing information to overcome policy and legal inertia
3. "Watch your language" - ensure information to be shared is appropriate, accessible, and actionable by taking into consideration vernacular, jargon, medium, and context
4. Use the information technology that is available to and used by the affected community

The Way Forward

Despite broad agreement that information sharing underpins productive civil-military coordination in HA/DR, key issues will arise in the coming years, particularly in relation to localization because of resource constraints and practical experience. The information sphere continues to change daily for better and worse as more people than ever have the opportunity to participate in conversations even as those very same people are increasingly exposed to mis- and dis-information, cyber-attacks, and data breaches. Moreover, the development of ever more powerful artificial intelligence (AI) models has the potential to disrupt information spheres in untold ways; these models have the ability to handle significantly more data than any one person or system heretofore brought to bear on HA/DR datasets, but they also frequently analyze data in inscrutable ways. Nonetheless, some information sharing practitioners are already examining the ways in which AI models can support decision-makers by laying out probable impacts of a hazard, operational timelines of disaster events, and response parameters. These trends can either promote the involvement of local, affected communities in disaster management or they can close out locals whose voices are drowned out or discounted.

In the past decade, researchers have considered how militaries can adapt their attitudes and practices regarding information to ensure better coordination during disaster responses. One of the key recommendations is that military players can view information as a commodity to be delivered to other players in the HA/DR space – e.g., other militaries, affected government agencies, affected communities – in the same way that humanitarian relief commodities are handled – i.e., free-of-charge to those in need. Additional research is being devoted to examining models for localization to incorporate improved accountability, power-sharing, and information flows within the nascent "green humanitarian" movement. Although the overall goal of such efforts is to ensure that the humanitarian system does not exacerbate the climate change crisis, a clear consequence of such a shift will be to uproot colonial power dynamics that observers note remain embedded within the humanitarian system and that marginalize indigenous and local knowledge. In international humanitarianism, as in the broader climate change discourse, the under-representation of indigenous voices at global conferences contributes to "global North"-led approaches that not only may fail to save lives and reduce suffering but may also contribute to environmental degradation, less resilience, and additional risks and vulnerabilities. The "green humanitarian" movement foresees a future wherein more seats at the table are held by locals, indigenous communities, or representatives of the "global South" and, therefore, information shared among stakeholders is of higher quality and is more useful for elaborating strategies and programs to confront existing and future climate change-influenced hazards and to ensure that humanitarian action does not exacerbate risks and vulnerabilities, including to environmental collapse.

The cornerstone of localization is to ensure humanitarian action is as local as possible, as international as necessary. Practitioners' willingness (or not) to foreground local needs surrounding generation and ownership of data as well as information product flows will impact civilian-military coordination and all other aspects of HA/DR even as climate change and strategic competition impact the space. Information will remain a key commodity, and the reality of disaster response is that no organization works alone; therefore, no organization can avoid sharing information.

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