DRR and Health in Covid-19 Pandemics: The ASEAN Experiences

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Outline

• Multi-hazard considerations within existing ASEAN DRR/DRM strategies
  – AADMER Work Programme 2021-2025
  – SG-AHAG

• Natural hazards and disaster resilience considerations within ASEAN COVID-19 response frameworks
  – Special ASEAN Summit on COVID-19
  – ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF)
  – Strategic Framework on Public Health Emergency (SFPHE)

• Highlights on recent disaster emergency responses during COVID-19
  – DELSA Support to AMS NDMOs in Mitigating COVID-19
  – Disaster Responses in ASEAN amidst COVID-19 in 2020
Propositions

Coherent approach on health and disaster risk management, multi-hazards considerations in disaster risk reduction, and integrated Covid-19 / pandemic responses are the key factors in DRR and Health in Covid-19 Pandemics by the ASEAN
Multi-hazard considerations within existing ASEAN DRR/DRM strategies

- ASEAN Agreement On Disaster Management And Emergency Response (AADMER)
- ASEAN Vision 2025 on Disaster Management (link)
- AADMER Work Programme (AWP) 2021-2025
- The ASEAN Declaration on One ASEAN One Response (link)
  - SG-AHAG
Natural hazards and disaster resilience considerations within ASEAN Covid-19 strategies

- Special ASEAN Summit on COVID-19
- ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF)
- ASEAN Strategic Framework on Public Health Emergency (SFPHE)
  - Establishment Of The ASEAN Regional Center On Public Health Emergencies And Emerging Diseases
Special ASEAN Summit on COVID-19

• The Special ASEAN Summit on Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) was held on 14 April 2020 and subsequently delivered a Declaration which outlined the following, among others:
  – “Intensify cooperation for adequate provision of medicines, essential medical supplies and equipment, including, but not limited to diagnostic tools, personal protective equipment etc. and encourage the development of regional reserves of medical supplies as well as utilising relevant ASEAN reserve warehouses to support the needs of ASEAN Member States in public health emergencies.”
  – “Bolster national and regional epidemic preparedness and response, including through the possible setting up of a network of experts on public health emergencies for future need, strengthening the capacity of existing ASEAN’s emergencies response network namely the ASEAN Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) Network, the ASEAN Risk Assessment and Risk Communication Centre, the ASEAN BioDiaspora Virtual Center (ABVC) and the ASEAN Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre) for future public health emergencies.”
  – “Cooperate in ensuring social safety net for our peoples, preventing social disruption and instability as a consequence of negative impact of the pandemic, continue efforts to design and implement risk-informed and shock-responsive social protection systems to reduce the vulnerabilities of at-risk populations and improve their overall resilience.”
The ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF) was adopted at the 37th ASEAN Summit in 2020 under the ASEAN Chairmanship of Viet Nam. The ACRF serves as the consolidated exit strategy from the COVID-19 crisis.

It articulates ASEAN response through the different stages of recovery, by focusing on key sectors and segments of society that are most affected by the pandemic, setting broad strategies and identifying measures for recovery in line with sectoral and regional priorities. Since the pandemic is still evolving, the approach to recovery should be proactive and all encompassing (whole-of-community), flexible and agile so the region can easily adopt its strategies to changing conditions.

The ACRF Implementation Plan outlines ASEAN’s phased approach in recovering from COVID-19:
- **Re-opening (short-term)**: given differing epidemiological status across the region, close cross-sectoral coordination is required for a safe reopening to assist people and businesses in adapting to the new normal.
- **Recovery (medium-term)**: given the high interconnectedness in the region, its recovery will depend on its weakest link. It is important to join hands to work towards faster and stronger recovery together.
- **Resilience (long-term)**: the recovery framework and its implementation plan must be aligned with ASEAN’s shared vision and contribute to long-term resilience.
The ASEAN Leaders’ Declaration of the 8th ASEAN Health Ministers’ Meeting or “ASEAN Unity in Health Emergencies”, highlighted regional cooperation in information sharing and assistance during times of crises. The ASEAN Standard Operating Procedures for Public Health Emergencies (SOP-PHE) was agreed by ASEAN leaders during the Special ASEAN Summit on COVID-19 on 14 April 2020.

The ASEAN Strategic Framework on Public Health Emergencies capitalizes on good practices of the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management, and on existing mechanisms under the ASEAN Health Sector, and other relevant sectors. It builds on the ASEAN Agreement for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (ADDMER). The Strategic Framework also supplements the work of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre) by highlighting health sector participation in public health emergencies, while ensuring complementarity with the ASEAN Joint Disaster Response Plan and other SOPs of the ASEAN Health Sector.
Highlights on recent disaster emergency responses during COVID-19

- DELSA Support to AMS NDMOs in Mitigating COVID-19
- Disaster Responses in ASEAN amidst COVID-19 in 2020

Over 400 disasters reported in 2020
Compounding impacts of Multi-faceted Risk Landscape in ASEAN

- Under the current pretext of an ongoing pandemic, COVID-19 adds further complexity to the risk landscape of ASEAN, and the way humanitarian relief is conducted.

- Disaster response mechanisms are reviewed and adapted to ensure business continuity under the circumstances. Unlike in usual operations, humanitarian actors/responders cannot travel and support the affected governments due to travel restrictions and new normal practices, including quarantine measures. Furthermore, social distancing guidelines and personal protective equipment (e.g. face masks, hand sanitisers, etc.) have not been high on the list of priorities during humanitarian efforts such as mass evacuation and sheltering of displaced communities. In addition, critical infrastructures that support public health emergencies such as hospitals and healthcare facilities may be affected.

- Priority focus under current pandemic circumstances:
  - **Short term**: Invest in localized preparedness strategy to empower local actors/communities
  - **Med term**: Strengthen disaster resilience in communities and shock-resistant infrastructure
  - **Long term**: Enhance disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation policies
Thank you