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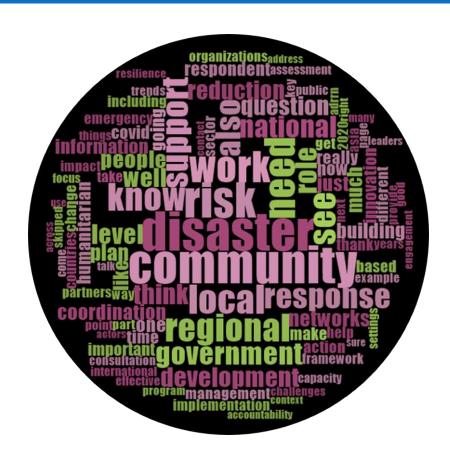
Building a Healthy Humanitarian Ecosystem in Asia-Pacific

Views from the 2020 Regional Humanitarian Partnership Events

Acknowledgements

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List of acronyms

ABCD	Asset Based Community Development
ADRRN	Asian Disaster Reduction and Response Network
AHA Center	ASEAN Humanitarian Agency
ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
CBPF	Country Based Pooled Funds
CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
ECDPM	European Centre for Development Policy Management
ECQ	Enhanced Community Quarantine (Philippines)
GAR	Global Assistance Report on Disaster Risk Reduction
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ICVA	International Council of Voluntary Agencies
I(NGO)	(International) Non-Governmental Organisation
MOP	Mandatory Operating Procedures
NEAR	Network for Empowered Aid Response
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN)
ODA	Overseas Development Aid
ODI	Overseas Development Institute (UK)
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PDRF	Philippines Disaster Resilience Foundation
SFDRR	Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction
UN	United Nations
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

Foreword

The Humanitarian Partnership Events convened between November and December 2020 was the alternative online format for the annual meeting previously held in Bangkok - the 'Regional Humanitarian NGO Partnership Week'. As Covid-19 was gripping the world in 2020, ICVA (International Council of Voluntary Agencies) and ADRRN (Asia Disaster Reduction and Response Network) were in the midst of preparing their 10 year strategies through to 2030 and a decision was made to use these annual Humanitarian Partnership Events co-hosted by OCHA (UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs), ADRRN and ICVA to pose the question: "what will the future of humanitarianism look like in the Asia-Pacific region over the next decade?" As a virtual event the process was structured to allow any organisations from these networks to propose discussions and panels on issues they felt were important in helping to answer this question and the fact that the events were not geographically bound, enabled greater participation.

This policy paper seeks to amplify the views and experiences articulated during these Regional Humanitarian Partnership Events, complemented by an online survey of ICVA and ADRRN members, key informant interviews (see Methodology) and a literature survey.

While there is a robust debate about which aspects of the humanitarian system need incremental, transformative, or revolutionary change, the extent of the changes required is not a question this paper seeks to answer. It recognises that there is great diversity in opinion, but it is hoped that the views expressed during the partnership events and subsequent consultations will help move the discussion forward on what and how these changes can be made to help build a healthier humanitarian ecosystem which can meet the challenges of the future, as well as informing ADRRN's 10-year strategy to 2030 and ICVA's regional approach.

Methodology

A grounded theory approach was used to draw out the emerging themes from a combination of desk research, the views and experiences articulated at the regional consultation and subsequent webinars, a survey across the ICVA and ADRRN membership and key informant interviews.

The authors either attended as observers or listened to the recordings of all of the online webinars (13) as well as participating in the online Regional Consultation (copy of the programme in Annex 2) and conducted the interviews. Alongside these events, a survey was sent out to the ICVA and ADRRN members remaining open for just over one month (12 November – 14 December 2020) with 74 responses, of which 45 were valid (survey questions in Appendix 3). These were then followed up with interviews in early 2021. The interviews, webinars and regional consultation were then transcribed and coded with some strong themes emerging.

Participants and respondents were from local CSOs, national NGOs, UN bodies, research institutes, universities, national, regional, and international networks, INGOs and consultancies.

1. Limitations (what this paper is not)

- o   The paper is not a comprehensive analysis of current humanitarian trends in the literature but how these are perceived by participants.
- o   While often you will see the term Asia-Pacific, it is important to note that participation from people and groups representing the Pacific was limited.
- o   Much of the discussion and those who participated had a strong focus on the ongoing pandemic, climate and disaster aspects with less attention given to conflict and refugee issues. We made efforts, not all successful, to mitigate this as the process went on.
- o   This paper does not list every point that was raised by participants over the course of the extensive consultation events process. For the reasons of brevity, this is only a selection of the points made. We have tried to be faithful to the data in highlighting those issues that were brought up most often by participants, or those which participants highlighted as most important.
- o   The recorded videos of the consultation events, separated by themes, are fascinating, and we invite those reading the report to find more detail on the topics that most interest them.

2. How to read this report

The report aims to be useful to humanitarian policy makers and operational actors in Asia-Pacific, even those who may not consider themselves strictly 'Humanitarian.' It is hoped that many of the lessons from the region will also hold key learnings for others across the globe.

The report is structured in a way to showcase the themes and discussions that emerged within the various elements of a healthy ecosystem: a) interconnectedness b) diversity c) evolution[1]. In reflecting these themes, we hope to show the complexity and diversity of opinions within the sector and region. For each theme the inputs of consultation participants have been supplemented with background information from a literature review of recent grey and academic reports pertinent to each topic with recommendations, based on analysis and discussion of the themes, are drawn out at the end of the document.

Partly because of the risks that humanitarians face in their work, all inputs are anonymised, rather than attributed.

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[1] *This framing has been inspired by the episode 10 of the Trumanitarian "The collaborative contrarian". https://trumanitarian.org/*

Recommendations

Reviewing the findings, we read a clear call for a more inclusive and reconceptualised humanitarian system, one that strives to be less of a pyramid structure driven by a few major organisations and one that acts more like a 'humanitarian ecosystem.' The aim would be a system which integrates the energies from all the disparate actors contributing to humanitarian work in a mutually respectful synthesis, is connected and can evolve in the face of dramatic changes in its environment - both metaphorical and literal. While there is still a lot of uncertainty about the future, it is clear if changes are not made, we risk continuing to fuel a 'supply driven' humanitarian system that misses the needs and capacities of populations affected by crises and continues to exclude/overlook many who are already contributing to humanitarian work in the region[2].

In this section we summarise some of the key recommendations coming out of the discussions, events, interviews and survey conducted in the preparation of this paper.

Recommendation 1 – response and preparedness

Strengthen an integrated approach to response and preparedness in the region, particularly a common understanding of needs and roles in addressing issues such as climate change, which stand to overwhelm the currently structured 'traditional' humanitarian system if not better linked to resilience, DRR (Disaster Risk Reduction) and development efforts.

- o Create a mechanism in which anticipatory action is linked with humanitarian, DRR, climate change adaptation and development efforts. In such effort to anticipate, identify potential risks together with local leaders, organisations and mutual aid groups, who are traditionally not included in the humanitarian sector, so that they become embedded in any response planning.
- o The scale and impact of climate change in the region requires a wholistic approach that connects and harmonises the efforts of resilience, DRR and humanitarian actors to reduce the risk and impacts of climate change. This will require shifts in coordination and financing mechanisms.
- o Work towards a common understanding of humanitarian need - recognition and analysis of need across all contexts, better recognition of emerging or unrecognised humanitarian needs even in "middle and high" income contexts with high-levels of inequality.
- o Humanitarian tools and services need to be better scalable from very small local responses to overwhelming mega-disasters - greater recognition and funding allocation for smaller disasters will help reduce the compound loss of resilience and mitigate the impact of more severe events in the future.
- o Better integrate hyper-local civil society, mutual aid groups and other structures into response mechanisms and contingency planning.

Recommendation 2 – financing

Currently financial systems struggle to discern how much is flowing to local actors and how much is contributed by local actors or those outside the international system. This gives an inaccurate picture of scale of need, who is meeting which need and the opportunities to invest in local financial mechanisms. Additionally, the current mechanisms are not suited to the more holistic and inclusive humanitarian approach required (and that is emerging) that we have outlined in this report.

- o Better accounting of humanitarian financial needs and flows are required in the region including mobilising more regional and national sources which allow for quality and flexible funding.

- o Intentionally link climate risk funding with DRR and preparedness efforts in the region.
- o Renew support for efforts to ensure humanitarian funding mechanisms are simplified and foster due diligence standards more accessible for local organisations so that more granular and nuanced mitigation actions are taken at scale, this should include incorporating more of a risk sharing, rather than a risk transfer, model.
- o Systems to monitor funding flows that account for contributions made by national and local entities to highlight the true costs of humanitarian need in the region that are intentionally linked with international finance data.
- o While continuing to advocate for increased humanitarian, development and climate funding from high-income countries, identify alternative sources of funding that are more regionalised and reliable, allowing for long-term planning and sustainability.

Recommendation 3 – risk analysis and reduction

Risk forecasting and analysis should take account of the systemic and intersectional nature of risks, which when compounded, multiplies the impact of any standalone risk.

- o local leaders, organisations, women's groups and mutual aid groups, who are traditionally not included in the humanitarian sector, must be part of the risk analysis and planning to effectively identify risk mitigation and management strategies.
- o Risk analysis should be effectively communicated to communities so as to support early action.
- o Risk analysis should be informed by multisectoral evidence which accounts for both the causes of hazards and the factors which affect communities' responses to them.
- o Preparedness and contingency planning should consider psychological impact of crisis.
- o Invest more in monitoring systems without violating privacy and individual rights (Do no harm).

Recommendation 4 – localisation and inclusivity

Humanitarian coordination and response mechanisms should reflect and build on existing ecosystems at the national and sub national levels.

- o Many actors who mobilise and respond during crisis at a local and national level do not consider themselves humanitarians. More inclusive language is needed in the region to better reflect the diversity of actors involved in DRR and response as well as improving understanding of strengths, weaknesses and needs in each context.
- o International organisations should re-organise their structure and roles against the principle of as 'local as possible as international as necessary' to better support their commitments to the World Humanitarian Summit and more specifically, the Grand Bargain.
- o Greater significance should be given to national and subnational recognition and definitions of crisis to provide a more accurate analysis of humanitarian need and locally led responses in the region, many which will not require international or regional assistance.
- o More concise and proactive effort is required to map the existing capacities of local and national actors during non-emergency times to support more effective and timely scale up during response.
- o Create tangible connecting points between local, national, regional stakeholders, through connecting networks with strategic collaborative areas. While doing so, identify local champions, and concentrate on proliferating their expertise to scale; and consider these support functions as one of the key roles for INGOs and international organisations in the region.
- o Harness and better coordinate the wealth of technical specialism around specific hazards in the region such as earthquakes, volcanoes and typhoons to scale across the international humanitarian system – there is a role here for regional networks such as ADRRN and ICVA.

- In light of the increasingly centrality of local NGOs, networks such as ADRRN and ICVA can act as an interlocutor between CSOs in the region and regional agencies such as the AHA Center and UN agencies.
- Promote the importance of more equitable partnerships between international, national and local organisations within the humanitarian ecosystem which share financial, security, risk and legal elements rather than just 'service delivery'.
- Foster more regional collaboration on humanitarian issues. Risks and hazards are increasingly borderless thus regional networks have an important role in facilitating improved understanding of common risks and impacts and supporting collaboration harmonised approaches- noting that countries tend to look to neighbours for experiences and approaches.
- The language used to describe humanitarian work in the region should be more inclusive. Many organisations who contribute to humanitarian action do not identify as humanitarians thus do not see themselves as part of the ecosystem. For improved coordination language needs to better reflect ground realities vs the global institutions.

Recommendation 5 – regionalised and globalised response

At the same time as more localisation is required, there is a need for greater levels of global and regional collaboration to meet response needs - pandemics, climate change driven disaster, and displacement do not respect borders.

- Regional coordination and collaboration should be activated to complement country level initiatives on issues that are or have potential transboundary impacts.
- Regional humanitarian bodies and networks should foster more dialogue and solidarity on core cross cutting issues such as humanitarian civic space, human rights and humanitarian principles and public health.
- Strengthen investment in truly globalised preparedness and risk-sharing, including around pandemics and public health, but also for specialised capacity to address cross-border challenges.
- Strengthen global advocacy to protect shrinking civil society space in all countries as a universal value, building on humanitarian principles and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Building a Healthy Humanitarian Ecosystem

Interconnectedness: Understanding risk as systemic

An important part of a healthy ecosystem is the extent to which the elements within it interact productively with each other and strengthen the whole. As the webinar presentations, survey responses and interview discussions were all set within the backdrop of Covid-19 and the overlapping effects of the pandemic and natural hazards are compounding socio-economic vulnerabilities in many countries, this highlights the need to better understand the intersectionality between these issues in order to better anticipate, plan and respond to crises.

Recent reports paint the nature of risks in Asia-Pacific as 'systemic', rather isolated time bound and geographically specific incidents. Systemic risks threaten the wider systems of human life in the region, systems that are not widely understood to be at threat[3] and less 'traditionally' humanitarian in nature, such as supply chains.

"The number of people in humanitarian need has grown by two thirds since 2015. This is...complicated by intensifying disaster trends, more frequent events, the growing reality of systemic and interconnected and cascading risk, and the compounded impact of disasters - as we have seen this year."

Speaker, Introduction to the Regional Partnership Events

The nature of humanitarian crises as being system-wide risks is not always well understood throughout the region, although climate change is the exception, as it is usually understood as a system-wide risk.[4] this lack of recognition around such interconnectedness means that the models humanitarians and governments are using to understand disasters and crises may be outmoded and too bounded to fully appreciate their wider impacts outside of what is recognised as the current humanitarian sector.

"This interconnectedness cannot be ignored – risks are shared: a change brought about by a disaster in one location can create feedback loops and have profound, mainly negative, effects in other parts of the region, if not the world."

UNDP-RBAP-Recovering-from-Covid-19-Lessons-from-Past-Disasters-Asia-Pacific-2020 Report

The Covid-19 crisis is a confluence of different crises, which have all had systemic and cascading effects. Countries such as Bangladesh have experienced a global downturn in the garment sector: one of their main employers has shut down, exacerbated by the final collapse of several high street clothing chains in the Global North which has led to factories closing and people losing their jobs. At the same time severe natural disasters and protracted humanitarian situations such as events in Myanmar impact outside of its national boundaries as refugees flee into Bangladesh and Thailand. All impact each other, increasing systemic risk across the whole region – they might start out as one country's problem, but their impacts can reach beyond borders.

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[3] *UNDP-RBAP-Recovering-from-COVID-19-Lessons-from-Past-Disasters-Asia-Pacific-2020*
[4] *UNDP-RBAP-Recovering-from-COVID-19-Lessons-from-Past-Disasters-Asia-Pacific-2020*

1. Climate change

Beyond the metaphor of an ecosystem change, the existential question for the humanitarian community is that the actual ecosystems are changing at a dangerous and unprecedented pace - leaving the humanitarian system as 'a $25bn industry trying to deal with a $trillion problem'[6] and most of our respondents agreed that the sector is underprepared. As discussed above, the humanitarian system is not set up to deal with slow burn, overlapping, and chronic forms of disaster or the longer-term effects of a disaster. It was primarily set up as a short-term response mechanism that has gradually expanded to include more development related work such as disaster risk reduction and resilience building. But the sector has yet to explore how to deal with the protracted, longer term consequences of disasters. Finance too is still largely mobilised to respond to disasters rather than to address prevention or to deal with situations which are spread out over long periods of time or that cross national boundaries.

The ways in which the sector needs to change, however (e.g. localisation/humility, risk reduction, deeper partnership with climate donors), may ultimately make humanitarianism fit for the 21st century, and able to move on from its roots of OECD networks addressing Africa's famines and civil wars, for example. It must be said too, that the sector changing is not going to be enough: the clear enormity of climate change impacts means that, even if all the SDGs were to be achieved, disasters will increase and major increases in humanitarian financing must be found for this 'new normal'.

Across the Asia-Pacific region, 2020 saw further escalation in extreme weather events and natural disasters, in terms of frequency and severity. Climate change is reaping what has been sown by growing carbon emissions and these disasters are predicted to get worse each year. However, these hydro-meteorological hazards are not the greatest threat to the region; the more multi-dimensional, slow burn threats posed by climate change are even more dangerous. As sea levels rise 'megacities' such as Tokyo, Jakarta, Ho Chi Minh City and Shanghai for example, are sinking and some are being advised to move residents and development to new locations. Of the 15 cities most at risk from sea level rises globally, 11 are in the Asia-Pacific region[5] and some island states face complete extinction, meaning whole populations will be displaced, whole cultures dispersed.[6]

Amidst Covid-19, Typhoon Goni was the strongest tropical cyclone of 2020 and in late October/early November, Goni reached category 5 (the highest), killing 24 people, causing thousands of people to be displaced, and destroying crops in the Philippines. The total economic losses suffered, including infrastructure damages, was estimated at $400 million.[7] Typhoon Vamco hit the country a few weeks later, killing 73, and leaving total economic costs of $1bn across both disasters. In the same months a succession of nine typhoons hit Vietnam, with the deadliest Molave, killing 24 people. Multiple floods and landslides followed, leaving the country with $1.3bn in costs. In Afghanistan, drought affected 250,000 people and subsequent heavy rain and snowfalls on dry soil gave rise to flash floods that then hit 21 out of 34 provinces, killing 14,136 and affecting more than 240,000 Afghans.[8] The impacts of climate change and environmental degradation in terms of increasing disasters are now beyond doubt.

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[5] https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/03/asian-cities-urged-to-bolster-defence-against-rising-seas/#:~:text=Major%20Asian%20cities%2C%20including%20Tokyo,to%20relocate%20assets%20and%20people.

[6] https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11852-017-0531-7

[7] Counting the cost 2020

[8] rk_overlapping-vulnerabilities_digital_singles]

Humanitarian actors can be quite removed from areas which are of direct relevance to them, as they fall under different parts of the international system. ADRRN wants to support the building of a resilient Asia-Pacific and this task inherently requires activity that starts even before DRR begins, and these activities fall more obviously under both climate change adaptation and those more associated with longer term development. Increasing debates in the humanitarian community suggest that projects in these areas should be engaged with so as to reduce the burden on humanitarians (and economies) later. It is also, in the siloed world of humanitarian and development financing be a way of accessing climate funding,[9] for example, a Senior Policy Advisor at the IFRC, said that a project they were involved in to enhance the hydromet office and build their weather risk forecasting enabled her organisation to access Green Climate Fund financing for reducing the level of risk at an earlier stage than is usual within a humanitarian context.

This demonstrates inherent tensions, where elements of risk reduction fall outside what is considered a 'conventional' humanitarian focus and practice and how these might be addressed. Whilst not perhaps considered within 'traditional' humanitarian funding envelopes, the Green Climate Fund is contributing to the humanitarian effort where its mandate intersects with DRR and resilience building. This also loops back to the need to consider interconnectedness more pro-actively, and to think outside the current narrowly defined humanitarian 'box.'

Another project aimed at bridging the gap between projected (lack of) humanitarian capacity and the likely mega disasters to come, is the Complex Humanitarian Crises initiative, which aims to convene stakeholders of all types to predict and map projected mega disasters, to coordinate what roles they intend to play. This seems a positive move towards something many are calling for – a new humility and recognition that in the face of climate change, the formal humanitarian sector can at best fill in the gaps, rather than do everything itself. The problems are simply too large for one sector alone to address – again speaking to the need for a more interconnected understanding and approach that adapts to an ecosystem rather than a single system.

There is a risk of submerging the clearly defined humanitarian role into adaptation and risk reduction work. One proposed solution was that those risk reduction actions closest in time to major risks, might be the most appropriate for humanitarians to engage with more. This might include improved forecasting, early or anticipatory action, and supporting sustainable recovery work. However, these activities will only work if they come from better joint planning with development and climate actors, which in turn requires improved forms of partnership and dialogue, as well as the development sector improving their ability to be agile in the face of unexpected risks. If development actors are 'trapped within their log frames' - unable to adapt programs on a shorter time frame in the face of emerging crises - they may not be able to implement anticipatory actions, even if they want to. One approach that is being increasingly used is that of adaptive management, whereby the overall goal is agreed but as situations change the means by which that goal is achieve adapts accordingly.

More broadly participants brought up the need for humanitarian actors to intentionally engage wider societal stakeholders that influence disaster risk vulnerabilities when planning for DRR and climate adaptation; moving away from 'usual suspects only' gatherings and doing so outside of crises, so as to have time to strengthen collaborations without the added stress of an emergency situation. It was felt that this would lead to more effective and efficient responses when a disaster did strike. At a regional level, participants suggested periodically holding forums to engage with different sectors on common themes (e.g. climate change adaptation and local forms of collective insurance).

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[9] *Climate Change The Future of Humanitarian Action Podcast*

Networks such as ADRRN could play a crucial role in providing resources and sharing information on ways that humanitarian organisations can access these sources of 'preventative' climate risk funding. Combined with networks like ICVA and NEAR (Network for Empowered Aid Response) they can also play an important role of convening very different types of actors and starting productive dialogues. OCHA's exploring nexus approaches, and ICVA's prioritisation of climate change[10] suggest ways to bring these disparate worlds together with ADRRN playing a central role for the Asia-Pacific region.

As resources decline due to Covid-19's impact on economies with less funding available internationally, this kind of intersectional, creative approach to identify exactly where those intersectionalities might lie will become increasingly important – by manoeuvring themselves into the overlapping gaps in the Venn diagram, rather than sticking within their silos, humanitarians and humanitarian action could become increasingly attractive and relevant to other funding sources.

2. Facing multiple and cascading hazards

The very real threat of multiple and cascading hazards was a recurring theme raised in many of the webinars, as well as the survey and interviews. The overlapping effects of a pandemic and natural hazards are compounding socio-economic vulnerabilities in many countries - Bangladesh, hit by Cyclone Amphan and severe floods, Philippines, hit by Typhoon Vongfong, and Afghanistan experiencing long term conflict and food crisis - all saw much more severe impacts due to Covid-19 as well as the related restrictions on movement and are all having to deal with the fallout of these cascading and multiple crises.

"The pandemic and consequent lock down restricted the income and earning opportunities for the poor thus increasing the poverty level in lower income communities. The pandemic has restricted mobility, closed industries and businesses during its first phase, impacted agriculture production and drastically impacted the supply chain. This only exacerbated the miseries of the poor."

Survey Respondent

The Asia-Pacific region is seeing more frequently occurring natural hazards including earthquakes, tsunamis, tropical storms, floods, landslides, volcanic eruptions and droughts affecting millions of people every year. Since 2019, there has been a sequence of disasters with significant damages and losses and more people being displaced.[11] It is interesting to observe, that despite the severity of these disasters, the loss of life (apart from the Afghan situation) was low in terms of comparison to that of previous disasters. What these figures demonstrate is that in countries such as the Philippines, Bangladesh and India, mechanisms in place to save lives, primarily through improved early warning and better access to safe evacuation, have been improving. It is the effects, post disaster, that now overwhelm, including the loss of life to secondary disease or deprivation which is not easily calculated under the current humanitarian system. Improved DRR and response is resulting in less loss of life, but the financial impacts – shorter term for immediate reconstruction and longer term effect on the economy as a whole - are not seen as a part of the humanitarian 'envelope' and yet this is where much of the damage of disasters is now being felt. For example, how to compensate for $1billion economic losses in the Philippines or $1.3billion in Vietnam? How does a country or the region deal with the long term effects of a quarter of a million internally displaced people living on, and deriving an income from, vulnerable land?

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[10] https://www.icvanetwork.org/system/files/versions/EN%20Climate%20and%20Environment%20Charter.pdf
[11] UNDP-RBAP-Recovering-from-COVID-19-Lessons-from-Past-Disasters-Asia-Pacific-2020]

Discussion

Preparing for protracted and multiple displacement as a norm: Progress is being made on disaster displacement across Asia-Pacific, nevertheless, the specificities of responding to and managing protracted multiple displacement are often missing from such initiatives, meaning that the conditions leading to and perpetuating protracted and multiple displacement persist. To rectify this, we first need to understand the scale of the challenge, however, the current evidence base is insufficient to gauge the extent of protracted and multiple disaster displacements, as well as the drivers and intersectionality's that generate displacement following a hazard.[12] This requires work being more risk informed and more informed by the new dynamics of risk. In terms of disaster risk reduction, climate adaptive mitigation measures were also cited as an important area of focus in the coming years. There is a need to shift towards looking at the combined impact of multiple events rather than focusing on the "displacement" from a disaster as a discrete event.

Engaging with community perception of risk: A much more granular and nuanced approach is required to address how the distribution of different humanitarian actions impact at a community level with a greater need to understand risk and whose risks are being addressed. Whilst many may consider Covid-19 the biggest risk to life, a farmer whose land has been affected by drought or flooding may be more concerned about the threat to their livelihood and ability to provide for their family. Covid-19 has demonstrated the vulnerability of the increasing numbers working in the informal sector where lockdowns have made it illegal to meet face to face - meaning small producers can no longer sell their produce, products or services in the market. In other countries poorer communities refused to access testing or engage with test and trace because in so doing they would be legally compelled to self-isolate with no way of being able to earn an income.

A stark example was cited by one presenter in respect to a poor community in Bangladesh's approach to Covid-19. For this community, who do not have enough to eat and are at risk of losing their jobs because of Covid-19 and therefore unable to provide for their families, it is seen to present less of a risk than starving to death.

"Vulnerable people stopped caring about what was going to happen because they've found very little difference between dying of starvation and dying from the virus."

Participant from Localised Surge Capacity: Lessons from Covid webinar 8th December 2020

Understanding these different hierarchies of risk provides greater insight as to how the Covid-19 pandemic is being perceived and experienced differently amongst different communities and will help to build a more effective public health response for the next pandemic.

Science/evidence informed understanding of risk: The 2018 GAR (Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction) argues that "as data-collection efforts across different global frameworks are embarked upon, it is necessary to look at indicators afresh across goals and targets. It is difficult to measure progress against targets if the data being collected is not consistent so as to be fully aggregated and thus comparable. Progress against the seven Sendai Framework targets, for example, has been difficult to measure, as there has been poor consistency in the type of data collected. What is apparent is that the poor and vulnerable bear the brunt of the risk and fatalities associated with disasters."

Many of those consulted for this report called for greater nuance and granularity of data and measurement. Two ways in which more accurate data can be collected might be suggested:

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[12] *Reducing the risk of major hazard displacement in Asia-Pacific*

1. **The 2018 GAR calls for a different way of measuring** so a move away from absolute losses expressed in economic terms towards a percentage of relative loss at a household level. Looking at absolute losses essentially wipes the vulnerable off the priority list, as the rich obviously have more to lose so this way of measuring losses is inherently anti-poor. CRED (The Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters) is applying a similar approach to measuring the impact of loss of life following a disaster – looking at the percentage of the population affected, rather than the absolute numbers. This then levels the playing field so that a disaster in Vanuatu, for example, whilst having less absolute loss of life than one in Bangladesh, gains a fairer place in the 'hierarchy' of disasters within the ecosystem.

2. **Establish metrics** for those dimensions of disaster impacts that accrue to the most vulnerable by delving deeper into distributional analysis, moving away from regional, national and subnational data to the household level. This also takes into account an even greater nuancing, so that it is not just about an overall loss of life in terms of body count, but who within the household has lost their life and the way in which that might impact the whole household and in turn the community. If the income earning head of the household has lost their life, this has much longer-term economic effects for that household; if children have lost their lives, this might have a greater impact on the psychological well-being of other members of the household – this level of detail in turn then informs a more effective humanitarian response.

The goal is to first learn in finer detail how disasters affect people's lives in a systemic way and then support countries to engineer solutions and influence human behaviour to successfully rebound from disasters."[13] Not only should we be looking at how disasters affect people's lives but also how people react to disasters as some of the reactions around evacuation, for example, are highly complex and thus far, little understood.

Mental health and gender based violence: 'Humanitarianism' often conjures images of life saving needs such as water, food, shelter, however many also cited how the pandemic combined with other aspects of our human needs. Several of those consulted raised the issue of an increased need for psychosocial support; mental health has dramatically worsened during the pandemic, as an increasing number of studies around the world show. The increased isolation of many during restrictions on socialising during lockdowns and subsequent job losses or ability to earn a living, combined with confinement, has led to emotional breakdown and put stresses on families not used to spending so much time together in often cramped and overcrowded spaces. Gender Based Violence (GBV), which always increases during disasters, has become a more chronic problem during this extended period of uncertainty, and children not attending school has seen a major increase in child marriage[14]. Traditionally these areas receive extremely low amounts of funding relative to the need that exists, and relative to other kinds of humanitarian assistance[15],[16] despite an acknowledgement of their prevalence and impact.

The long-term psychological effects on adults, and more importantly on children as the next generation, will need to be closely monitored as the world moves out of this pandemic and seeks to prepare for others. No-one knows enough about this disease to know how to effectively react in the long term and some participants said that it felt as though governments across the world were just reacting with a short term view, rather than proactively anticipating and thinking about the long term. The increase in some cases, of government

[13] *UNDRR (2018) Global Assistance Report on Disaster Risk Reduction*

[14] *https://www.savethechildren.org.uk/news/media-centre/press-releases/covid-19-places-half-a-million-more-girls-at-risk-of-child-marri0#:~:text=An%20estimated%20500%2C000%20more%20girls,and%20three%20per%20cent%2C%20respectively.*

[15] *http://unitedgmh.org/sites/default/files/2020-09/Brief%2B%2BFunding%2Bof%2BMH%2Bin%2BHumanitarian%2BSettings%2B%2BFINAL%2B.pdf*

[16] *https://reliefweb.int/report/world/where-s-money-how-humanitarian-system-failing-fund-end-violence-against-women-and-girls*

sponsored misinformation and the politicisation of the virus was also highlighted by some participants as confusing, with the subsequent erosion of trust leading to increased levels of anxiety.

3. Transnational nature of issues

Displacement

Crises such as those in Myanmar or Afghanistan are protracted conflicts that do not tend to fall neatly into the model of geographically and time bound conflicts. They impact neighbouring countries and require regional support and engagement of other governments, intergovernmental bodies and civil society. Conflicts have been shown to have a two-way causal connection to climate breakdown[17], for example, reductions in usable farmland, water and forests is leading to resource-based conflicts, which can be refracted through existing ethnic, religious, class or party affiliations. Conflict also causes immense pressures on the environment, and desperation can lead to unsustainable use of resources.

The strains of forced displacement and migration - both national and international – require collective efforts to ensure more ownership and shared responsibility for solutions as well as improved understanding of causes and impacts to improve future preparedness efforts. Given the strains the pandemic has put on States- with many of them turning inwards this will be a challenging but necessary step.

Pandemics

The international community was aware of the growing risk of pandemics, with warnings sounding out from Asian countries hit by SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) and MERS (Middle East Respiratory Syndrome), amongst others. In 2016, in response to these warnings, UN member states extended the definition of risk to include biological hazards within the SFDRR (Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction). However very few countries actually integrated those recommendations on biological hazards into their risk reduction strategies[18]. Indeed, the UK conducted Exercise Cygnus in 2016[19] to stress test the country's infrastructure, systems and policies in the event of a severe influenza pandemic, all of which were found to be lacking. Some 22 recommendations came out of this exercise, however, many were ignored, rendering the UK underprepared for the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020[20], resulting in one of the highest loss of life per 100,000 population globally.

During the first phases of the pandemic, in its health and pandemic management responses, the Asia-Pacific region hosted some of the best performers in world rankings[21]. By pursuing policies of 'zero Covid' – locking down citizen movements until community transmission rates were very low or non-existent, countries like Vietnam, Taiwan, South Korea and China were able to avoid a continual cycle of lockdown and release that beset other countries[22]. Nonetheless, preparedness and response varied wildly across the region, with much of the region grievously underprepared for this systemic shock. The current situation in India shows that not all Asia-Pacific countries took effective approaches, and the mounting human catastrophe that can attend such failures in state response[23] is very much evident at the time of writing. Also, while effective response to the pandemic did not correlate to per capita income, clearly certain approaches such as movement restrictions

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[17] https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0022343320984210

[18] UNDP-RBAP-Recovering-from-COVID-19-Lessons-from-Past-Disasters-Asia-Pacific-2020

[19] Department of Health and Social Care. UK pandemic preparedness. October 2020.
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-pandemic-preparedness

[20] https://www.telegraph.co.uk/global-health/science-and-disease/six-crucial-pandemic-lessons-government-ignored/

[21] We should learn from the Asia–Pacific responses to COVID-19 - The Lancet Regional Health – Western Pacific

[22] We should learn from the Asia–Pacific responses to COVID-19 - The Lancet Regional Health – Western Pacific

[23] https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-india-56961940

required a level of government or community capacity to avoid causing severe secondary harm. The pandemic has highlighted the need for more tailored, community-centric solutions to public health crises for the radically different environments in the region - from densely packed urban areas, to remote islands.

The 2019 GAR cites climate change as being 'the great risk amplifier'[24] and it can also be said that Covid-19, communicable diseases and public health more generally, has demonstrated itself as a second risk amplifier - particularly for the poor and vulnerable. These two global threats are linked in more ways than one – examples of which are presented throughout this report: the loss of arable land due to drought, flooding and landslides meaning a further encroachment into, for example, forests where the propensity for zoonotic spillover is much greater; the increase in displacement both internally and internationally leads to informal settlements with poor sanitation and hygiene where disease can spread very effectively – the specific examples are many.

There has also been an increase in governments loosening environmental protection laws to regenerate economic growth in a response to the impact of Covid-19 on economies, freeing up developers to move into tropical rain forests. This is not only eroding indigenous people's rights, it is also exposing the world to yet more zoonotic diseases. Citing the situation in Indonesia: "Economists have criticised the law for attracting investors who will have little regard for indigenous peoples' rights or for environmental protection"[25]

Lessons need urgently to be learned from this for the future, even as we cope with the aftershocks for years to come. Fundamentally, the world does not yet really manage systemic risks - instead it attempts to atomise and respond to discrete disasters. Covid-19 has highlighted this glaring, illogical failure of global preparedness and the current model of projectised funding reinforces this. The necessary accompaniment to discourses of localisation, therefore, is a more globalised system of preparedness to address these interconnected risks. A more cooperative and prepared international system would not have descended into vaccine nationalism and panicked competition in the face of crisis. At the time of writing this report, we are still not out of the Covid-19 pandemic, - India is seeing a more deadly second wave and Europe is now experiencing a third wave with more variants of the virus, while access and distribution of vaccines remains severely skewed toward wealthy countries, further amplifying global inequality.

Discussion

These cross-border risks are increasing and give rise to new questions about who 'owns' the response to them - international, national or otherwise. The humanitarian community needs to engage with the complexities and contradictions between localised responses, increased government led responses (particularly in Asia-Pacific) and the transnational nature of the most severe risks we face –climate change, conflict and pandemics - in order to better address them. Some respondents felt that the cluster system (originally designed to enhance coordination) has created alternative silos that actually reduce systems thinking. Others were more concerned with the fragmentation a more nationalised humanitarian response might give rise to, meaning common operational standards are replaced with a diversity of structures that find it difficult to work together, thereby moving away from the coherence the Cluster system was originally designed to do.

All of this is still playing out, but in a crisis, there is opportunity for reflection and change, and humanitarians can use these opportunities to drive home to governments the nature of systemic risk. Whilst the global recession may not feel like a propitious time to win arguments, the severity of the crisis should make governments and international organisations open to reappraising both the political 'ownership' and the financing architectures of systemic risk.

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[24] _UNDRR (2019) Global Assistance Report Distilled p15 GAR19 Distilled (undrr.org)_

[25] _Dil, S et al (2021) Rolling back social and environmental safeguards in the time of COVID-19 The dangers for indigenous peoples and for tropical forests, Forest People's Project_

4. Inequality

Inequality shapes the experience of disaster and crisis. As many GDP rates in the region fell into negative figures, this exacerbated risks and vulnerabilities for millions of people already at-risk or vulnerable pushing ever more people into at-risk or vulnerable status. Already, an estimated 400 million people live below the international poverty line of US$1.90 a day and more than 1 billion live on less than US$3.20 a day[26]; 1.6 billion people lack access to basic sanitation, and around 260 million also lack access to clean water at home and over 40% of people in the region have no access to health care.[27]

Participants highlighted some of the impacts of Covid-19 on the communities they worked with. Livelihoods immediately ran into crisis, especially in informal sectors with poverty and hunger rising fast, and slow burn food crises have worsened in some countries. Access to basic health and education services for poor communities has also reduced for those groups at a time when it is most needed. In Afghanistan, at the time of interview, children had not been in school for a year, storing future impacts for their lives; according to one survey respondent, the impact on public health systems, already stretched long before the pandemic with a ratio of one doctor to 963 people and one hospital bed to 1,608 people, has been heavy. Its shortfall of trained medical staff is estimated at 200,000 doctors and 1.4 million nurses, with universal health coverage virtually non-existent.

While many adapted with innovation and digital outreach solutions this also exacerbated inequality. Inevitably, where community engagement was delivered in person, much switched to digital. Vulnerable groups such as those with disabilities, older people, as well as groups with less access to computers, mobile phones or internet provision such as women, faced severe difficulties and fell back on the mutual aid of their communities. Often isolated before the pandemic hit - these sectors of society have been particularly badly affected. The poor are more likely to live in overcrowded areas and are also less likely to be able to afford PPE, making them doubly more vulnerable to infection. Refugees and IDPs have been particularly stigmatised during this period as host communities, already stretched, are being placed under much greater strain - leading to increased resentment and hostility.

A gender focus is also critical to understanding inequality. Women have suffered more from the Covid-19 crisis -[28] as they a) took on more of a dramatically increased childcare burden, b) were more likely to be the frontline healthcare workers risking life and health, c) saw major escalations of gender-based violence, d) saw increased risks of trafficking and modern slavery, e) risked and saw major levels of job losses as migrant workers, and f) faced challenges of access to healthcare.

Discussion

Addressing public health in this context requires immediately redressing social protection and income security. This has also led to a welcome rise in support for universal basic income or minimum income guarantees, which in retrospect may have been cheaper than the alternative of people refusing to get tested[29]. However, the reality is that many governments in the region do not yet have a commitment to the idea of universal social protection, and systems remain patchy in many countries. Even as countries increasingly move into "middle-income" status, the reality of severe inequality means that large portions of the population will be vulnerable to slipping into humanitarian need. The pandemic has highlighted a call for a more intersectional approach to communities, which understands how existing vulnerabilities are exacerbated by new risks and

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[26] ESCAP (2020). *Impact and Policy Responses for COVID-19 in Asia and the Pacific.*

[27] ESCAP (2020). *Impact and Policy Responses for COVID-19 in Asia and the Pacific.*

[28] *https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/GiHA%20WG%20analysis%20%20brief.pdf*

[29] *https://policyscotland.gla.ac.uk/would-a-basic-income-be-the-best-response-to-the-covid-19-crisis/*

this is to be welcomed as it could lead to more effective DRR and responses. There has also been a broader discussion of the crucial role of humanitarians and civil society have to play in highly unequal societies, even when Government's overall capacity has increased, when the most marginalised are not seeing those gains. Protecting and strengthening civil society, localisation at the NGO level and looking at alternative sources of financing outside multilateral and bilateral flows are all ideas that have been discussed.

Diversity

An essential element of a healthy ecosystem is its diversity. A strong theme which emerged throughout the events was the range and roles of different actors involved in humanitarian response supporting the Covid-19 response in their countries and communities, many of whom may not traditionally define themselves as humanitarians. In addition to the growing diversity of actors, many emphasised the adaptations that were made to cope with the shock of the pandemic, highlighting both the need and opportunities for humanitarians to remain relevant in this 'new normal'.

1. The rise of mutual aid groups

Covid-19 did not start the concept of hyper-local 'mutual aid' and assistance outside the model of the charitable 'giver' and the charitable 'beneficiary'[30] but the growth of mutual aid in so many diverse countries, geographies, cultures and contexts has nonetheless been a fascinating phenomenon. Many participants referred to how Mutual Aid Groups 'sprung up everywhere', able to undertake responses that were both speedy and knowledgeable about local contexts, albeit with gaps. Participants in our survey and interviews saw a rise in less formal, self-help organisations of individuals and communities at village and town levels who organised their own forms of response and felt that at individual, family and household levels and up through to the local community level, there has been an increase in awareness of personal responsibility. Many more people feel 'involved' in this crisis when other previous 'humanitarian' disasters have happened to 'others'.

In many cases, mutual aid represented people's feelings that their governments had failed to protect them. In Malaysia, the '#KitaJagaKita' mutual aid initiative, connected willing donors to various NGOs such as Queer Solidarity Fund and #SabahAid.[31] The #RefugeesRise campaign demonstrated and celebrated the 'frontline first response' role many refugees were taking in supporting their communities during Covid-19.[32] The crisis has also sharpened the focus on the importance of good local leaders. With this rise in informal, self-organised groups responding to needs at a community level, one webinar participant suggested starting "with what the community already has and then strengthen and empower what already exists". One example was the Philippines Grocery movement in which those more able and less at risk were grocery shopping for their more vulnerable neighbours. This is not unique to Asia Pacific, but a symptom of an appreciation that this pandemic has affected us all in some form or other, so there has been less dependence on more conventional 'donor-recipient' modes of support.

2. Role of affected communities

Much was said about the need for communities affected by crises to be far more involved in both needs assessments and evaluations, for them to be placed at the centre and to be an integral part of the design of these interventions. There were calls in several of the webinars to establish relationships in times of non-

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[30] _Long Before COVID-19, Muslim Communities in India Built Solidarity Through Mutual Aid - IDN-InDepthNews ~ Analysis That Matters_

[31] _Politics of the Pandemic~ Covid-19 and Challenging Malaysian Narratives – The Oxford Student_

[32] https://www.kaldorcentre.unsw.edu.au/publication/refugeesrise-what-frontline-workers-can-show-us-about-responding-covid-19

emergency so that organisations could 'hit the ground running' when a disaster struck. This is a relatively inexpensive activity but a key element to effective DRR or anticipatory action – so a quick win.

"We may be limited with regards to financial resources, but our wealth lies in our social capital, the trust the partner communities put in us."

<div align="right">

New Normal: Lessons from Asia webinar, convened by APG 11/12/2020

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It was stated above that Covid-19 has fast tracked this appreciation for the role of affected communities within INGOs, but national NGOs too need to be truly participatory in their approaches, using local language/dialects and bringing community actors into the assessment and evaluation teams. This is obviously not a new 'crie de coeur' but it was clearly something that has not been fully addressed or operationalised within many NGOs' ways of working and a real sense of frustration as to why this has been so slow in coming into standard practice was perceived by the authors. It has long been acknowledged as an issue in the development sector and for local communities who do not work within the western construct of development-humanitarian siloes but operate along a continuum that works with building resilience appropriate to the vulnerability faced, responding as well as possible to any shocks or disasters that might occur and then working with communities to reconstruct what has been damaged.

There is a need for better and more basic communication – at a community level many speak in local dialects rather than the national language of a country or even state. If DRR, preparedness and response capacity building is to take place at this level, it needs to be conducted in the dialect of that community to be effective and bought into by that community, rather than be seen to be delivered by outsiders who do not have that community's lived experience.

ADRRN is working with groups in the Philippines, all of whose projects were impacted by Covid-19 and the government's Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ), however, what was striking was that in every case, they adapted and completed the work. Their work was embedded in local communities, where there was a sense of obligation to try to continue at a time when the international actors had been recalled and their activity just stopped. Strong evidence of the power of localised humanitarian preparedness, response and reconstruction.

3. Working from national to subnational level

As major economies locked down, export markets ground to a halt. In Asia-Pacific, government responses to Covid-19 varied, but in most cases it focused governments and even NGOs on their country rather than the wider region. Many participants and presenters talked about a more inward focus - a form of 'Necessity Nationalism' or 'Covid Nationalism' as economies shrunk and there was less focus available for more outward focused and regional humanitarianism.

The increased need for self-sufficiency at a national and sub-national level is seen by many of our respondents as a good thing. Less dependence on the international 'system' and a greater sense of collective community responsibility has drawn a picture of what a humanitarian system based on more equal partnerships could look like. The fact that so much has been achieved over the past year also underscores this as it provides a tangible demonstration of the capabilities of national and sub-national actors that have been very side-lined in the current internationally dominated humanitarian system and speaks to the need for a more national focus, which includes resource management and mobilisation.

One participant said that the story of the last three decades in Asia-Pacific has been one of the growth of institutional capacity at multiple levels, at state level especially within disaster management agencies; within

academia, in the number of specialists and technicians the region houses, and in the number of foundations and NGOs it has. But in many cases this thriving ecology of organisations only ensures that institutional capacity is now held at national levels, with for example most training programs being in English and in capital cities, even if they are being run by national NGOs rather than INGOs. So the next step is the building of distributed institutionalisation – ensuring that access to cutting edge scientific technologies and knowledge, including for forecasting, response and recovery, is made available to local authorities and groups in areas which are particularly disaster prone. In addition, training programmes should be done in regional languages and dialects, perhaps via live video learning and structured capacity building and leadership development, so that institutional capacity is distributed to the areas that need it the most. This would suggest that some of the necessities of the pandemic – the greater reliance on remote management and on video support, need to be built upon and expanded systematically. It also points to the need for INGOs to start to see the role they are playing as one of leadership development and mapping levels of community resilience and organisation, rather than one of 'doing for'. It also raises a serious point around the fact that INGOs can and should be thinking more about 'letting go'. With the combination of the impacts of Covid-19 and cuts to some OECD aid budgets, this may well be the reality of some INGO strategies for the forthcoming decade or beyond.

4. Partnerships with the private sector and faith leaders

Numerous respondents wanted to see deeper partnerships with faith leaders and the private sector. There is already more involvement from the private sector in DRR – and it is not all about money. Some organisations are working in more of a strategic partnership with NGOs, rethinking their core business models, partnering on their supply chains and core business expertise - SEEDS India is an example of this in its partnerships with Honeywell, Price Waterhouse and Facebook India. It was also felt that some governments are more comfortable engaging with the private sector in response than they are with INGOs, having perhaps longer standing relationships and more familiar ways of working.

Private -Humanitarian partnerships of course throw up new questions and challenges. Like any partner - major corporations have their own interests, and form partnerships to meet those interests, which can include co-option and whitewashing their records. Companies can, on the one hand, be publicly supporting humanitarian efforts, and on the other be working with repressive regimes, and codesigning new forms of population surveillance and repression which reduce civic humanitarian space[33]. Therefore, rather than passively restating: 'private sector involvement is helpful in humanitarian efforts' we should see potential private sector partnerships as a course to chart, with a clear sight, strict due diligence and ethical standards. Whilst reality is forcing a humility on some who subscribe to humanitarian principles – it is not possible for those organisations to meet demand: in reforming themselves as convenors and facilitators of wide and diverse alliances, humanitarian actors will need to develop strong common principles on when and when not to engage with corporations, and indeed other partnerships.

There are certain broad elements that can lay the groundwork for this. Humanitarian actors and the private sector share certain key strategic interests – stability of economies, reduction in conflict, reduction in systemic risk and reduction of cascading disasters. In the Philippines, a group of service providers set up the Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation (PDRF) as the umbrella organisation for DRR and response for the private sector. It conducts training and ensures resilience in supply chains so that businesses can get back to normal as soon as possible. Its Emergency Operations Center provides early warning forecasts and coordinates the private sector response in collaboration with government and NGOs to ensure that services are both building their resilience and reinstated as soon as possible after a disaster.

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[33] *https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/03/19/962492-orwell-china-socialcredit-surveillance/*

It was also acknowledged that faith-based groups can be key when operating at a local level – they are often at the centre of any community and provide a physical space for convening, shelter and solidarity. This links back to the local leadership discussions where the caveat was raised that not all local leaders represent all members or interests within a community. There was a similar concern that faith leaders potentially favour those adhering to their faith to the detriment of those who follow other faiths. Nevertheless, for humanitarian action to be effective, these leaders cannot be overlooked by those further up the disaster management hierarchy – both nationally and internationally and it is therefore necessary for humanitarian interventionists to understand the sensitivities of these faith contexts for effective DRR and response.

5. Adaptations made for Covid-19

ODI (The Overseas Development Institute) has helpfully tracked the way in which the pandemic has changed operational realities in humanitarian work[34]. It outlined five key trends: 1) local actors are playing a role in communicating public health messages, and in engaging key communities, 2) local and national first responders have been key to distributing PPE and food, including in Myanmar and Afghanistan, 3) Local leadership in local cluster based coalitions has been essential to reaching affected communities, 4) Existing networks and partnerships supported the ability for consortia in locations such as Manila to swiftly adjust and distribute needed aid, and 5) Funding has been effective when organisations could raise funds in country or from the community, when funding included extended flexibility, and when new funds were made available to local actors and NGOs.

Many respondents to our surveys and interviews saw severe challenges in operating through Covid-19. Smaller organisations, for example, reported facing existential crises due to the changed priorities of the donors in response to the pandemic. Others spoke of the heightened mistrust in centralised government policies and approaches which was mainly associated with increased levels of misinformation and its use by governments to pursue political agendas. The proactive closing down of civil society over the past few years by some governments has fuelled this mistrust in centralised messaging around the pandemic and other policy arenas with some claiming that governments are using Covid-19 as an excuse to limit civic voice.

Others emphasised the opportunities some of the impacts of Covid-19 have provided - particularly in fast tracking the localisation agenda - as overseas travel ground to a halt and as local responders replaced the work of international staff. Environmentally, lockdowns have also brought into stark contrast the very obvious effects of pollution in large urban centres such as New Delhi with pictures of bright blue skies rarely seen pre-Covid. At an operational level there are both negative and positive impacts. On the negative side, it has meant that local NGOs have been unable to engage with their target communities to deliver elements of programming, heightened by a lack of access of many of the more vulnerable groups to the internet, limiting the means of communicating. On the positive, it has brought about more innovation and a demonstration to the international humanitarian community on what can be achieved without such close involvement and oversight of INGOs.

Due to INGO staff being unable to travel, travel budgets for international airfares and accommodation have been in some cases transferred to in-country partners for operational work. Many donor/evaluation meetings now take place by video call and are implemented by local partner staff – this is cheaper and less time consuming than having donor visits, into which national NGO staff, drivers and vehicle resources are diverted. It has also led to a greater focus on building the capacity of local partners to conduct evaluations and needs assessments. There was a strong acknowledgement that capacity and leadership has really grown in the region and that this has contributed significantly to the region's ability to prepare for, mitigate against and respond to

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[34] https://www.odi.org/blogs/17437-covid-19-and-local-humanitarian-action-five-emerging-trends

disasters, as highlighted by the remark that "Asia is an area with pockets of humanitarian crises in a sea of non-humanitarian disasters".

One contributor made a concerning point, stating that "colonisation of aid has gone up as the traditional fundraising base of INGOs has further shrunk. They [INGOs] have become more aggressive on fundraising in the global South. There are also more cases of risk transfer to local actors than risk sharing and less acknowledgement of the role of local actors by international actors". This has been further exacerbated by the move to remote management of projects which has meant in some cases, that risks are transferred to in-country staff and organisations. This intersects with the reductions in civic humanitarian space, in that without being safely housed in a major INGO and without the same insurance or protection, staff members and their small CSO organisations can be easier targets for restrictive, repressive or violent suppression by governments or associated paramilitary groups.[35]

Some discussants felt that Covid-19 has brought together a mix of different actors that might not necessarily have cooperated coherently previously. The added layer of complexity that Covid-19 has placed on every activity across the globe means that everything is currently being assessed through the lenses of health and epidemiology - not something that might have been mainstream previously. It has meant that different professionals are working together at a personal level, and this will have major implications for the potential of innovating approaches, learning from different sectors and incorporating what might be a standard approach for a health team, into a shelter initiative, for example.

One thing Covid-19 has demonstrated is that a humanitarian system which is over reliant on multinational mega INGOs, with supply chains and staff mobility across the world, is not adequately resilient in the face of many major risks such as a pandemic – although it was able to adapt swiftly in many ways, it appears, according to recent reports, that surge capacity being replaced by remote support could be a virtue born out of necessity[36]. This learning should strengthen efforts for a localisation that genuinely invests in organically occurring local organisations and their capacity.

Discussion

i. Mutual aid

The Mutual Aid phenomenon, one that is surely relevant to broadening our understanding of humanitarian response, has led to more 'ownership' of the crisis by communities, involving groups that are not personally facing crisis, and not only the poorest groups, according to some respondents. As an organic phenomenon Mutual Aid has, within weeks, exemplified a non-hierarchical, ultra-localised response to a global crisis, and holds lessons useful to address the question of how civic humanitarian space is changing which we explore below. Of course, as with any voluntary, citizen led initiative, in every country it will have major gaps, and people can only give what they themselves have to give.

Mutual Aid may suggest that the role of humanitarians may sometimes need to move towards the role of a 'community organiser' role and away from a 'technical specialist' or a 'project manager' just as NGO professionals have done in other areas. Humanitarians might consider monitoring the level of community organisation, the number of local groups and existing community leaders in locations and include this in data mapping metrics, providing tools for communities to organise themselves, sharing communication and peer to peer platforms, spotting and providing structured leadership development for community leaders, and so on. There is also the possibility of thinking more on how professional disaster response organisations can integrate

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[35]https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/2020-11/IASC%20Interim%20Guidance%20on%20Localisation%20and%20the%20COVID-19%20Response_0.pdf
[36] https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/resource-documents/covid-19_localisation_briefing_note_web.pdf

Mutual Aid frameworks into their planning and implementation - moving to a hyper-localised model of response. Plan International's Quarterly Hot Spot Forecasts trained and supported citizen and youth reporters to send in videos as soon as disaster nears or occurs. This is an example of an approach that moves towards such citizen led mapping in real time as a disaster unfolds.

A need for more coherence was called for by some participants, saying that civil society in Asia is too fragmented to enable an effective interface for engagement. This was not a call for a reduction in the number of local organisations servicing their communities, but of more active coordination, information sharing and joint strategising with joint programmes of work. Some saw a potential role for ADRRN as an interlocutor for agencies such as the AHA Center to engage more with the wide range of CSOs in the region. ICVA could also play an increased role in supporting the coordination between actors of different types too. The full UN Cluster systems only exist within a few countries in Asia-Pacific and other countries in the region have either nationalised their mechanisms or have a different coordination infrastructure. So, how to address this fragmentation in such a context of diverging operational standards, approaches and expectations is a deep question for the humanitarian ecosystem.

ii. Effective ecologies

One theme that runs through this report, that was stated at virtually all the events, was the need to understand effective ecologies of diverse actors working together well, influenced by humanitarian principles, if not necessarily governed by them. In Asia-Pacific, local organisations are already, often effectively, dividing up labour and specialising in certain technical specialisms, for example, such as earthquakes technology, or typhoon response. These organisations, not least because of their proximity to disasters and their accumulated experience, are in some ways becoming world leaders in terms of their technical expertise. But they need support from larger organisations, including networks like ADRRN, ICVA, INGOs, international networks, UN, donors and other multilateral bodies to scale those forms of expertise across the global humanitarian system. That includes amplifying local voices, expanding operational capacity, and financing. ADRRN and ICVA could play an important role in getting these groups in front of regional and international decision makers.

iii. 'Distributed or movement humanitarianism'

2020 has fast tracked the adoption of technologies to hold participatory meetings and workshops. It has now been proven that almost every part of running an organisation – the finance, the personnel management, training, IT support and payments can be done remotely. Face to face working is important in order to build relationships and trust but some participants claimed that the balance needs to shift, or rather that face to face work should be kept in its place, and not be the go-to mechanism as it has been in the provision of international 'surge capacity' historically.

Targets could be set for a more equitable distribution of leadership, competencies, power and management of staff within INGOs. Programmes could also become far more distributed to grassroots level than they are, through a greater use of conference calling and video calling technology. More important than this, international actors need to challenge themselves in an honest and transparent way as to what their added value is, in a particular situation. This will involve asking some uncomfortable questions that have already begun to be asked in the light of Covid-19 and the impending cuts in aid budgets announced by some bilateral donors. Recent reports[37] have suggested that humanitarians still occupy a strong, unique niche in conflict situations; large, globally influential INGOs are also important in terms of protecting and expanding civic space and security for partner organisations. They are crucial voices also in promoting new funding mechanisms and

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[37] *The-Future-of-Humanitarian-NGOs-HFP-Discussion-Paper-Aug2013*

civic space at the international and global level. More broadly, ICVA and other networks play an important role in convening diverse actors who are all involved with preparation, response and recovery, to amplify and provide a platform for diverse voices.

iv. Challenges to diversity - Shrinking civil society space

The world as a whole is seeing the growth of populism and authoritarianism, and the deterioration of democratic institutions as well as the belief in democracy.[38] Asia - Pacific is no exception in its democratic regression over the last decade[39]. This trend appears to have been severely exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic, according to the CIVICUS State of Civil Society Report 2020.[40]

A key feature of democratic regression across the world is attacks on the space that civil society has to operate in, including humanitarian organisations[41]. The CIVICUS Monitor documents the 'enabling conditions' for CSOs worldwide and subverts the notion that robust democracy is in any way the global norm, showing that only 3% of people currently live in countries where civic freedoms are fully respected. By contrast, 25% of the world's population live in the worst category, 'closed', and another 43% in the 'repressed' category.[42] This picture appears to be worsening. A 2018 ICVA review showed that humanitarian actors faced new challenges in operating, with 53% saying the problem had worsened substantially while 19% note it had worsened by a small amount.[43]

Some key challenges facing humanitarian organisations are a) the use of law as a tool of social control b) restrictions on CSOs registering, operating, and gaining funding, c) restricting the ability to engage in advocacy, d) restricting access to internet and other forms of technology, e) limiting access to international funding, f) misuse of counter-terrorism laws, and g) excessive force. A team of researchers from the University College of London found that, of laws they studied in a cross country survey, (1) 47% restrict the formation, registration, or operation of CSOs; (2) 28%constrain the ability of CSOs to receive international funding; and (3) 25% restrict peaceful assembly[44].

There are attempts in many countries to isolate national spaces from multinational movements. Legislation introduced recently in India, for example, has added another layer of bureaucracy for NGOs wishing to raise funds from outside of India. Conversely, Indian NGOs cannot spend money they raise in India outside the country without a waiver, neither can they sub-grant international funds on to their national partners without more bureaucracy. As a result, many smaller organisations have suffered accordingly as moving these international funds to community partners has become increasingly difficult. In Afghanistan, in the case of Covid-19 funds from donors, the President issued a presidential decree with thresholds; for example: projects of over 80 million Afghani [AFN] (roughly $1 million) required cabinet approval and all aspects of NGO registration, tax and funding have become more difficult. Media Laws, NGO Laws, and a Law of Associations for CSOs are getting passed in quick succession, all of which present new risks to operating.

When governments put such restrictions in place, some work NGOs undertake, for example supporting marginalised communities or communities explicitly oppressed by the government, can often be prevented and is used by governments as a tool to prosecute sectarian agendas. The notion that humanitarians are in some way outside politics, that they represent only transcendent moral humanist claims and are in no way

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[38] *https://www.worldjusticeproject.org/rule-of-law-index/*

[39] *RES PONDING T O THE GLOBAL crackdown on civil society policy brief*

[40] *https://monitor.civicus.org/quickfacts/*

[41] *Effective-donor-responses to closure of civil space-FINAL-1-May-2018>*

[42] *https://monitor.civicus.org/quickfacts/*

[43] *https://www.icvanetwork.org/resources/scoping-study-civil-society-space-humanitarian-action*

[44] *Claiming-Back-Civic-Space-Towards-Approaches-Fit-2020s-Report-May-2020-ECDPM*

enmeshed in battles between interest groups, is losing traction fast. Questions need to be asked, therefore, as to what the implications of this are regarding the humanitarian principles of neutrality and impartiality.

Each country is different, and even where there are growing restrictions on civic space, the state is not monolithic, and different parts of the state - district, local, regional, national, and across institutions - may act differently towards different NGOs and CSOs. International development and humanitarian partners may be organisations 'caught in the crossfire' of increased restrictions and red tape, particularly if they speak out politically such as human rights organisations and will need to adapt their ways of working, sharing risk and allocating resources. Different contexts have differing levels of risk, and organisations are forced into different types of compromises. Sometimes unity across civil society can help, other times organisations need to keep their 'heads below the parapet.' However, there is a growing interest in how civic space can be defended and ultimately rebuilt.[45]

Reductions in civic humanitarian space also cannot be ignored in discussions of localisation.[46] If we are not careful, definitional confusion can take place between 'localisation', 'national government ownership of response', and 'local CSO involvement.' If the localisation agenda is taken to mean local organisations taking on roles previously played by INGOs and ignores the humanitarian space in which local CSOs operate, local CSOs are increasingly left facing severe security, financial and legal risks. That points to the need for localisation to be understood as an ecology of actors working to their strengths through equal partnerships. INGOs who have any involvement in a country must take the personal and group security of local CSOs as seriously as that of their own staff – as the IASC (Inter Agency Standing Committee) recently advised.[47]

A regional outlook to civic space can help foster positive standards across countries and multiple studies have found the existence of regional patterns. These patterns might be an indication that states copy the repressive behaviour of neighbouring states or, conversely, feel more pressure to refrain from repression if their neighbours do so. Regional imitation is an important factor in explaining these patterns, according to academic studies.[48] This suggests that countries can encourage their neighbours to improve standards.

A recent report funded by the Belgian International Development Agency carried out by ECDPM (European Centre for Development Policy Management) called on major donors, multilateral bodies, networks and CSOs to consider the following ways to reclaim civic space.

> **1. CSOs and national networks.** 'Nurturing whole-of-society approaches to civic space' Alliance building is necessary to win back civic space and there are many actors in any country with an interest in defending and extending it for a variety of reasons. As stated above, states themselves are diverse, and segments such as the judiciary can be powerful allies. Finance organisations can prefer freer information flows; Members of Parliament should be mapped; local authorities, the media and some private sector bodies can make up a powerful coalition (see the example of PDRF in the Philippines on page 22 of this report). Obvious allies can be found in similar sectors – development, disaster risk management and climate.
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> **2. Donors and development partners all have a role to play in defending civil society space. They can exert various forms of leverage**, depending on the relationship with recipient countries. Donor governments need to reflect on how they too are driving clampdowns on civil society, for example

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[45] https://www.icvanetwork.org/civil-society-space

[46] https://www.chaberlin.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/2020-05-publication-localisation-shrinking-civic-space-roepstorff-en.pdf

[47] https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/2020-11/IASC%20Interim%20Guidance%20on%20Localisation%20and%20the%20COVID-19%20Response_0.pdf

[48] Claiming-Back-Civic-Space-Towards-Approaches-Fit-2020s-Report-May-2020-ECDPM

through policy incoherence. Bilateral and multilateral trade deals often drive down regulations, for example around workers' rights, whilst development departments promote expansions of civic space in recipient countries. Donors need to be a great deal more flexible and treat relationships more as partnerships, respecting the increased risk that CSOs face. Donors can put in place many initiatives to ease conditions for CSOs, NGOs and INGOs, including the provision of long term, core funding, sharing financial risks better, providing pools of money to draw on for legal or security funds without notice, and allowing CSOs to reformulate the work they do, for example changing from advocacy to service delivery.

3. International vigilance, mutual aid and solidarity. Networks of CSOs can help to publicise cases to a wider audience, can seek legal and diplomatic support for humanitarians, and can organise forms of international solidarity that support their members at key moments of extreme pressure. It is essential for smaller CSOs and their communities to have networks which can provide forms of concrete mutual aid and solidarity, which can in some cases replace sub-contractual relationships with large INGOs, providing some measure of protection. Regional and international networks can also benchmark countries in a region against each other, aiming to promote a race to the top.

Evolution

A natural part of a healthy ecosystem is that elements are either replaced over time by newer species or those elements adapt and evolve. Like the humanitarian system which has been through many iterations and transformations, the changes facing the sector now and the realities of how humanitarian situations are being faced as described above demand for certain elements to be replaced or substantially adapted.

1. Localisation and decolonisation

i. Localisation

The need to equalise power structures within the global humanitarian ecology, was repeatedly made by respondents, as was the call to build resilience rather than reliance, a desire for an increased but different role from national and local government and calls for more equitable power sharing and the sharing of risk between INGOs and NNGOs and CSOs. Whilst 'localisation' as a concept came first and has become generally accepted as a desired end goal, the rhetoric around decolonisation and Covid-19 has given this further impetus. Asia has a strong, deep, rich 'localisation' that has now almost become the norm. The region is embedded in deeper and more complex debates: how regional and national resources can be more effectively utilised to (a) mitigate against

> *"Time to stop talking about localisation, but the way things are."*
>
> *Key informant interviewee*

hazards becoming disasters, (b) when a hazard does become a disaster, how to respond more effectively, (c) how to integrate distributional analysis and produce just and equitable outcomes, and (d) how to bring together the right ecologies of actors in a complex terrain.

ii. The decolonisation of aid movement

This has gained traction in the past few years, though more in Africa and Europe than in Asia. For those who are unfamiliar with the term, simply put it is a description of the aid sector as insufficiently evolved from its colonial or immediately post-colonial historical roots.

"You can trace its line of descent in how aid flows frequently map to soft power relationships between former colonial powers and former colonies; in how the career trajectory of many international aid workers often resembles that of colonial administrators; in how the "beneficiary" has been constructed as a post-colonial Other; in how local civil society is shaped to fit the mould of "the NGO" rather than more culturally appropriate or politically effective forms; in how "national" staff must learn how to conform to "international" norms in order to be allowed access to positions of power within international organisations." [49]

The terminology of decolonisation of aid does not as yet have much purchase in Asia, and this was reflected in the data gathering for this report. Perhaps this reflects the greater confidence in the region that in terms of resilience, humanitarian actors and indeed state agencies, including those who developed so successfully since the 1960s, have been de-colonised for a long time. Some criticise the terminology of decolonising aid as itself, a Western, post-colonial imposition, a one size fits all buzzword, that 'decolonisation was the disappointment of the imperial illusion of permanence'.[50] Nonetheless, many of the concepts of the decolonisation movement are relevant when trying to understand how humanitarian response in Asia-Pacific will or should evolve over the coming years, particularly in regard to rethinking financing and other critical issues.

2. Financing

While there are many aspects of localisation, one theme that got particular attention throughout was financing and the need to think more creatively in the space to meet existing needs and future challenges.

Questions of financing the region's humanitarian preparation and response are as urgent as the disasters themselves. The funding response to humanitarian crises since 2016 has failed to meet the needs, with international calls for funding receiving less than three quarters of what was requested. The gap between supply and demand now will increase meteorically as the combined effect of an increasing number of disasters, slow burn impacts of climate change, the impact of Covid-19 and a global economic downturn is resulting in a spiralling deficit in resources to mitigate and respond to crisis that has been compounded.[51] Indeed, in facing the slow burn crisis of a heating world, humanitarians are 'a $25bn industry trying to deal with a $trillion problem'[6]. Shrinking bilateral aid budgets, both in terms of proportional commitments, and absolutely as donor economies decline, will also have a knock-on effect for multilateral aid contributions who will see national contributions diminish as budget cuts are sought.

Increased pressure led some participants to comment on the fact that, with the shrinking of funds globally, this has led to INGOs competing with national and local NGOs for funds and squeezing them out. There has been a trend for INGOs to incorporate their country offices as standalone, nationally registered organisations able to tap into regional and national funding that might otherwise have gone to nationally owned and founded organisations. INGOs have the infrastructure and space to be able to write lengthy proposals and have the required policies in place ahead of applying for funds, which puts smaller, nationally owned NGOs at a disadvantage.

Therefore, there is no alternative but to support transformations in financing approaches and models: a) increased financing, especially for preparedness and risk reduction b) a new architecture of financing to put it back on a solid footing, c) new sources of finance, d) new models of social insurance, e) changing divisions of labour across climate, humanitarian and development actors and new actors, f) greater efficiencies in finance provision, and g) major remodelling of what humanitarian provision means, are now inevitable.

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[49] *https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/opinion/2020/07/13/decolonisation-aid-humanitarian-development-racism-black-lives-matter*
[50] *https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/decolonisation-comfortable-buzzword-aid-sector*

[51] *Bilateral aid programmes such as the UK's FCDO (formerly DFID) are cutting back from 0.7% of GNI to 0.5% within an already shrinking economy, just to give one example.*

To contribute to a healthy humanitarian ecosystem humanitarian financing must continue to evolve and innovate within a few of the following emerging themes:

i. Greater flexible and quality funding mechanisms

Redouble efforts to drive up efficiency: The sector has experimented with a number of tools that drive up efficiency, from pre-allocated pooled funds to multi-year contracts, to localisation of provision to anticipatory action. None of these have become more than niche forms of practice – most practice has been slow to change in each of these areas. Whilst change is slow, the continuing gap between supply and demand increases the need for these efficiency improvements, which in each case has huge promise.

Cash programming: One of the successes in recent years has been the use of cash. With Covid-19 restricting face to face work, the rise in cash-based programming for local communities was seen by respondents as more empowering, putting decision making in the hands of the cash recipient rather than the distributing body which has further underpinned the benefits of cash programming. Even previously reluctant governments, such as Indonesia, are starting to appreciate the benefits of cash-based approaches. This spreading of risk, and learning how to manage it, is what is needed if the world is serious about 'localisation'. It recognises the ability of communities to step up, take control and build their resilience their way.

The global humanitarian response plan, coordinated by OCHA, was able to quickly raise $2.5 bn from donor governments to deal with the Covid-19 crisis, a success in resource mobilisation. Critics claimed that 95% of its funding went to UN Agencies[52], and say that money did not reach the frontlines, though OCHA notes that that much of the donor funding to UN Agencies went eventually to NGOs, Governments and others, and that OCHA specifically used CBPFs (Country Based Pooled Funds) and CERF (Central Emergency Response Fund) to support a localised front-line response to the pandemic, providing $226 million to international and national NGOs, Red Cross/Red Crescent National Societies and other local partners.[53] Either way, the recovery process will need the same surge of collective thinking that was generated after the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami - when many countries were badly affected, not just one area of one country and countries pulled together.

Participatory grant making: This has been used by some foundations for some years and is attracting increasing interest. It essentially pushing the decision-making process around which initiatives to fund into the hands of those most affected by the funding, using a mix of peer-to-peer review, and more relevant criteria of recommendation more suited to a variety of contexts, rather than the current top-down model based primarily on financial due diligence processes that exclude many smaller, locally based but extremely effective organisations, from funding. It is a particularly relevant model for risk sharing and a tangible alternative for working towards the Grand Bargain.

ii. A focus on risk sharing vs transfer

There are more innovative financing mechanisms available, such as impact bonds and country based pooled funds (CBPFs) that have lighter touch due diligence and less hoops to jump through. For example, Start Fund Bangladesh was able to disperse considerable funds only a day after the pandemic led to restrictions on movement in Bangladesh – an appropriate amount of time during an exponentially growing pandemic[54]. Some

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[52] *https://www.cgdev.org/blog/faced-covid-19-humanitarian-system-should-rethink-its-business-model*

[53] *https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/GHRP_ProgressReport_22FEB.pdf*

[54] *https://reliefweb.int/report/world/covid-19-and-localization*

NGOs have complained that the due diligence associated with the CBPFs is still beyond their ability to fulfil, and some of the other mechanisms are hard to understand and access. There have also been criticisms that some funds have been disbursed too quickly and with insufficient oversight and enquiry. This throws to light the fine balance that needs to be achieved.

Despite its growing popularity, many donors are still nervous of the CBPF mechanism as it pushes accountability further away from them and so managing the risk is perceived as a major issue. The system is still heavily focused on risk transfer rather than risk sharing. One suggestion to move away from this would be to empower regional or national organisations to take on the management of funds and build capacity to manage the grant funding. ADRRN are working to put in place Mandatory Operating Procedures (MOPs) to allocate grants, manage the due diligence process in a more proportional, participatory and locally appropriate way (as outlined above) and ensure that community-based grantees receive funding and support that works for them. This leaves this capacity to manage grants in-house with ADRRN at a regional level, enabling ADRRN to then manage grants on behalf of other regional donors.

This desire to move away from the dependency on external / international funding intersects with the call to dig deeper nationally - both in developing skills and infrastructure but also in resourcing. This throws a spotlight on another underlying issue - that this dependency has created a vacuum of skills - and to a certain extent, appetite - to fundraise in some countries. This gap will need to be addressed and is also a role that ADRRN could fulfil.

A trend that re-emerges throughout this report is Mutual Aid - whether in hyper local Covid responses, or networked international solidarity in response to attacks on humanitarian civic space. Mutual Aid has in some senses been interstitial, i.e. it grows in the gaps left by formal systems. But financing of effective humanitarian action in the future equally cannot ignore the role it played in saving lives through the pandemic. Smart forms of financing could invest in building community assets and numbers of trained community organisers to facilitate the growth of informal and informed Mutual Aid without quashing its uniquely informal character. Donors funding the strengthening of relationships could ultimately be cheaper and more effective than funding specific project outputs when disaster strikes.

"CSOs need to have capacities in remote project management, and need to build trust, and to empower the community to play active role."

Participant in breakout rooms, first consultation event

3. New income streams and sources

Loss and damage funding: Since 1992, developing countries have pushed the agenda of opening up global climate adaption financing streams, to deal with loss and damage occasioned by disasters. In 2019 there was progress on this agenda, despite decades of intransigence from developed country governments. That progress did not add up to an agreement, but it set up a research process to scope out the scales of financing required and potential modalities. It also put in place interim governance of the process. Were this agreement finally to be secured, some of that money could justifiably go to humanitarians, to bridge the now structural gap between supply and demand for humanitarian financing.

Climate financing: The best case scenario is if these two aspects, internal reform and new external funding sources can form a synthesis. For example, humanitarians, not least ADRRN, are increasingly focussed on society wide solutions, anticipatory action and resilience. This can mean acting far in advance of crises, and in ways that may not seem like 'what humanitarians do' - for example strengthening national weather prediction

systems that link with communities' actions on resilience. That too is starting to see humanitarians accessing new sources of climate-related funding, such as the Green Climate Fund. As the 'loss and damage' discussions get increasingly progressed as part of the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) process, this may result in some of these funds being routed towards the spiralling humanitarian needs of the coming decade. This will require a political push for the acceptance of this responsibility by the OECD countries. As humanitarian resilience building overlaps with development work too, this may open up doors to ensuring financing needs are met. Networks can support members to explore these possible avenues, and to add their voices to global discussions on financing reform.

In working with climate donors to bring in more climate financing to build resilience and disaster readiness, a key need is to research and develop forms of sourcing financing on a hyper local level – tying in with proposals above to take institution building down to the very local level. For example, external funding that is currently spent on external actors could be relatively cheaply repurposed to capitalise village development funds of the local authority of national government. Private sector actors in each country could also contribute to capitalising these funds.

Reducing the load the sector takes on – redefining its limits and its porosity: This could mean developing a new division of labour with development agencies and international financial institutions, particularly in cases such as protracted conflicts. It might be from working more closely with new types of donors, for example insurance companies, banks, or industry groups. It might also mean moving in the direction of 'community organising' or recognising and aiming to develop and capacitate mutual aid groups, as discussed above. Asset Based Community Development as an approach might be relevant here and provides a body of theory to build upon[55]. This approach would draw back from the increasingly technocratic and professionalised approach the humanitarian 'sector' uses.

> *Asset-based community development (ABCD) is a methodology for the sustainable development of communities based on their strengths and potentials. It involves assessing the resources, skills, and experience available in a community; organizing the community around issues that move its members into action; and then determining and taking appropriate action. This method uses the community's own assets and resources as the basis for development; it empowers the people of the community by encouraging them to utilise what they already possess*

i. Increased disaster management capacity

It is widely accepted that prevention is more cost effective than response and one respondent stated that DRR needs to be much more mainstreamed into political processes and legislation, so it becomes part of an integrated national fabric, rather than seen as a separate area of focus. One of the main issues donors, in particular, have is that it is more complicated to evaluate DRR, as maintaining the status quo is difficult to measure and not as visible an impact, even if using a counterfactual. Such counterfactual evaluation and impact measurement methods need also to be mainstreamed within the sector to give DRR more prominence and value. This could be a reason why international donors favour the focus on response - it is much easier to measure in terms of both outputs and outcomes - and this again speaks to the need to 'decolonise' humanitarian response for it to become more demand led, and more effective. If more resources were channelled to governments or allocated by governments to strengthen their DRR activities, it would lead to less dependence on international support, which is something that has been demonstrated in a number of Asian countries. One such mechanism could be greater strategic involvement with CSOs on the part of the government, to ensure that vulnerable communities' needs are being addressed in this respect.

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[55] *https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7756527/*

Conclusion

A new vision for 'What is humanitarianism in Asia-Pacific?': A more inclusive narrative and system

In order to set the context of Asia-Pacific within the global effort to adapt, mitigate against and respond to disasters, it is worth stepping back from, and unpacking the term humanitarian briefly. The history of humanitarianism in the modern sense is relatively recent - from the first Geneva Convention in 1864 to GA 46/182 establishing the first three Humanitarian Principles in 1991, with General Assembly resolution 58/114 (2004) adding independence as a fourth key principle underlying humanitarian action and the establishment of the Cluster system in 2005. Much of what we now think of the humanitarian system is not even 20 years old, despite its roots going back several decades. In many ways it was a product of its time (late 1980s-early 1990s) with its Global North genesis, but times have changed rapidly. The localisation agenda, the desire to decolonise aid and indeed the shrinking of some OECD Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) budgets are pushing humanitarianism into uncharted waters that were not considered by the architects of the system in the late 20th Century, before the days of the internet and the increased connectivity that this has inevitably brought about.

The focus on the international framework agreements drives thinking about humanitarian response as a response that is triggered, either by a government whose resources and ability to respond are overwhelmed, or when a government chooses not to respond or is a party to a conflict. This definition has worked in contexts of failed states or conflict zones and mega disasters such as the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, the earthquake in Haiti and Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines. Yet the increasingly systemic and multi-causal nature of crises and the diversity of actors, is increasingly challenging this concept and the system it is built upon. A greater diversity of actors are now involved, including private sector entities and militaries, with different cultures and interests that may not align. This diversity requires an 'ecosystemic' way of operating, in which humanitarian actors attempt to steer or influence wider systems of actors, rather than expect to be the totality or even the majority of those who do humanitarian work.

As mentioned above, many countries in Asia-Pacific experience disasters on a regular basis and have extremely well developed infrastructures and processes to do so - at least within the historical scope of disasters they have experienced. For example, The Philippines experiences some 20 typhoons a year most of which are dealt with domestically and never reach the global 'humanitarian radar', despite requiring constant work for professional humanitarian organisations. The 2015 Nepal earthquake triggered an international Urban Search and Rescue Response with many teams flying in, but the majority of those who were pulled out alive were pulled out by neighbours and Nepali frontline responders.

While there clearly can be no single vision of humanitarianism to address the range of different challenges, there is wide consensus amongst our respondents more broadly that a "humanitarian system" is indeed still needed but one that is grounded in universal values and principles and needs to be strengthened to address increasing challenges. But beyond these basic facts, a new understanding of what humanitarianism means is coming out of the realities and cultures within Asia-Pacific - one focused on reducing suffering regardless of whether it is a "crisis", one focused on solidarity and mutual aid and one that attempts to address the greater interconnectedness and consequences of interventions.

It is not yet clear whether nascent approaches within Asia-Pacific, an area adapting to the frontline of environmental systems breakdown, will grow into a regional model or is part of a wider global shift. Nearly all participants in these discussions, however, underscored the need for a fundamental rethink and a new vision

for how the wider system - of organisations, financing and international relations - can shift to supporting the realities on the ground, and not try to re-shape them in its own image. We hope these conversations have highlighted a few steps and opportunities that can be taken towards this, even as the final destination remains unclear.

ANNEX 1: Asia-Pacific 2020 Regional Humanitarian Partnership Events

#	Webinar	Organisers	Recording Available	Overview
1	Local Leadership for Disaster Resilience	ADRRN Localisation Hub (Seeds India)	Yes	Most global frameworks, including the Sendai framework put a great emphasis on the need for local action to achieve its set of targets by 2030. Local humanitarian action calls for a coordination mechanism within and across sectors and with relevant stakeholders at all levels while recognising that risks have local and specific characteristics. An empowered local leadership is best positioned to ensure the frameworks' effective implementation on the ground. Local leaders can integrate the societal understanding of risks, which are critical for effective disaster risk management at the grassroots level. A recent report published by the ADRRN Localisation Hub - SEEDS jointly with UNDRR, highlights the stories of some of these local leaders from across Asia-Pacific and the lessons that others could learn from their experiences.
2	Regional Partnership Week Kick Off event	ICVA, OCHA, ADRRN	Yes	The 2020 Regional Partnership Events was an online journey of 3 months and comprised of a series of consultations and webinars that will bring key humanitarian and development actors for a focused discussion to share their perspectives on how disaster risk reduction, emergency preparedness and humanitarian response should transform in this changing context, especially due to the Covid-19 pandemic. As the initial activity of the 3-month long Regional Humanitarian Partnership Events, a regional consultation meeting focusing on the issue of 'Future of Humanitarian Response in Asia-Pacific' was held.
3	Preparedness and Response Planning in Reducing Vulnerability and Improving Humanitarian Assistance	Mercy Malaysia	Yes	People struck by disasters and emergencies count on coordinated and effective assistance and protection that are on time. In most disaster and crisis, the complexity and scale of assistance needed often stretch beyond the simplistic approach of delivering aid assistance without the strategic lens of

				responding in an integrated and sustainable way. Comprehensive and strategic preparedness and response planning are needed for the integration of multi-sector/cross-cutting response approaches, resource requirements, and monitoring arrangements to mobilise system-wide response to humanitarian crisis and developmental needs. The webinar unpacks the key areas such as designing a preparedness and response plan – key considerations and thinking, understanding risks – risk appetite and risk variables, and response preparedness – resource planning and management.
4	Mainstreaming Quality and Accountability	ADRRN Q&A hub (Community World Service Asia)	Yes	Quality and Accountability mainstreaming is a strategy towards promoting and sustaining greater accountability to affected populations. For successful accountability mainstreaming to take place, changes are required at different levels in the organisation. It involves the integration of Q&A in both programmatic and operational aspects in the organisation. Q&A mainstreaming within organisations is key to shifting attitudes and practices toward internal motivation to implement and self-monitor Q&A compliance. This organisation-wide process requires engagement across departments to assess existing practices, procedures, and policies, and then adopt changes through allocation of required resources. Organisations tend to embark on the accountability mainstreaming process through various entry points and means. The webinar explores the barriers to mainstreaming accountability, the process of mainstreaming and experience sharing.
5	The Impact of Multi-Hazard Threats Towards Multi-Sectoral Humanitarian Response	Humanitarian Forum Indonesia, Human Initiative, ADRRN, and ICVA	Yes	The webinar highlights the resilient capacity by the community to deal with multi-hazards, to identify mitigation and preparedness actions needed until community level toward types of hazards occur during pandemic situation, to obtain strategy for humanitarian actors (in particular CSOs and NGOs) to strengthen their role and resiliency for both organisation and staffs to deal with multi hazard obstacles and

				vulnerability in various sectors and to share lesson learnt of multi-stakeholder humanitarian operation implemented by CSOs and NGOs by highlighting coordination and cooperation to empower local leadership.
6	Safeguarding Know Act Apply	ADRRN Q&A hub (Community World Service Asia)	Yes	Safeguarding is a core component of our shared commitment to accountability towards affected populations. Keeping communities safe from additional harm, from sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment committed by our own staff is essential. The webinar builds upon the on-going initiatives for community safeguarding and will explore the basic issues such as key definitions of safeguarding and setting standards as well as discussing the increased challenges due to the Covid-19 crisis and potential solutions.
7	Promotion of Seismic Retrofitting in High Earthquake Risk Communities	ADRRN Earthquake Risk Management hub (NSET)	Yes	Many countries in Asia are prone to earthquake risks, and among various hazards, earthquakes have become the most devastating disasters in the recent, but the preparedness and risk reduction still has many gap areas. The webinar is organised with the primary purpose to disseminate current knowledge and practice of improving seismic performance of existing buildings and other structures by discussing on the significance of seismic retrofitting as an essential intervention measure for earthquake risk reduction, elaborate on the research and development on retrofitting across the Asian region, interface the scientific advancements into practical applications in at-risk communities and learn from the success and failures of past interventions to shape the way in the future.
8	How to make CRM Participatory & Responsive	ADRRN Q&A hub (Community World Service Asia)	Yes	Complaints handling is a key component to any safeguarding framework and remains one of the great challenges in organisational efforts to improve accountability, close the gap and listen to people's voices. To be compliant to this commitment, we need not only to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse, but act upon received reports. For this to happen, we need to proactively facilitate reception of such complaints. The How to Make Complaint Response Mechanism

				Participatory & Responsive webinar seeks to explore the reasons for the lack of reports, how to establish trust within communities through improved communication and identifying ways of ensuring better dialogue.
9	Building Community-centred Innovation Ecosystem – How Covid-19 is affecting our Practice on the Ground	ADRRN Tokyo Innovation Hub (CWS Japan)	Yes	Since 2017, ADRRN have been working with the members on community-centred innovation to ultimately realise sustainable resilience in the region. While Covid-19 pandemic has caused great restriction on the activities and communication of the actors in the ecosystem, local innovators, their partners, and our members are now trying alternative ways to maintain the partnership under the new normal. This webinar unfolds complex partnership relations in the innovation ecosystem by drawing on concrete case examples from Philippines, India, and Indonesia, and discuss how Covid-19 pandemic made the relations more complicated, with some positive changes as well. The speakers also explore the ways that they can better adapt to the new normal by advancing the existing partnership and forming new partnership.
10	Localised Surge Capacity in Humanitarian Action – Lessons from Covid-19	ADRRN Leadership in Emergency Action, Preparedness and Surge hub (RedR India)	Yes	This webinar brings forth the importance of motivated, skilled and locally available humanitarian personnel in addressing emergencies, drawing on the learning from Covid-19 response across Asia. Further, the webinar provides a platform to explore the dimensions of need and relevance of multi-sectoral response actors in the backdrop of Grand Bargain goals and SFDRR. Topics covered include cases from Cyclone Amphan, refugee and migrant population in Iran and Afghanistan, multi Stakeholder Covid-19 Response in Mumbai City, online capacity building of FLWs and ERs (Elected Representatives) for Covid-19 Response in Maharashtra and Gujarat, and ensuring Women-Focused Organisations are part of Covid-19 and humanitarian surge.
11	Responding to Disasters in the New Normal What Recent Responses in Asia Teach us	AADMER PARTNERSHIP GROUP	Yes	The Covid-19 pandemic and the increasing frequency of disasters in the Asia region present a challenge for humanitarian organisations to adapt, evolve and be better in ensuring that affected communities, local actors and the most vulnerable are able to

				participate, access and receive much needed support in their times of need. The webinar is organised by the AADMER Partnership Group (APG) with the purpose of sharing and learning from experiences of responding to Covid-19 in addition to the complex and increasing humanitarian crises in the new normal. Through this exchange of practical experiences, the webinar also aims to learn from the success and failures of past interventions as we look into the future of humanitarianism.
12	Panel Discussion - Is Accountability Truly Embedded in Organisation's Care Values and Activities	ADRRN Q&A hub (Community World Service Asia)	Yes	Quality and Accountability mainstreaming is a strategy towards promoting and sustaining greater accountability to the affected population. For successful accountability mainstreaming to take place, changes are required at different levels in the organisation. It involves the integration of Q&A in both the programmatic and operational aspects in the organisation. Q&A mainstreaming within organisations is key to shifting attitudes and practices toward internal motivation to implement and self-monitor Q&A compliance. This organisation-wide process requires engagement across departments to assess existing practices, procedures, and policies, and then adopt changes through allocation of required resources. Organisations tend to embark on the accountability mainstreaming process through various entry points and means. The panel discussion explores the different levels and ways of mainstreaming accountability. The event is organised by ADRRN's Quality and Accountability (Q&A) thematic hub is hosted by Community World Service Asia.
13	Preventing Statelessness and Mitigating the Impact of Statelessness on the Life of Affected Individuals	UNHCR	No	Statelessness is in itself a humanitarian challenge and leads to further human rights violations. While UNHCR is mandated to prevent statelessness and protect stateless persons, NGOs are essential for identifying affected population groups, providing basic services, assisting with strategic litigation, raising awareness, and engaging in policy advocacy with governments in order to find solutions for the affected persons. The webinar explores

				whether and how the cooperation between UNHCR and NGOs in the named areas of humanitarian engagement can be strengthened, and thus become more effective in addressing root causes and providing protection.
14	Guardians of the Planet Children & Youth Voices on Climate Crisis & DRR	Asia Pacific Youth Network + ChildFund	Yes	The Children and Youth Network in Asia Pacific (Plan International, World Vision International, Save the Children, UNMGCY, APCSS and UNICEF) had launched the Children and Youth Consultation report in Asia Pacific countries title "Guardians of the Planet" as preparation for the upcoming APMCDRR. Nearly 10,000 children & youth from over 21 countries gave voice on their concerns, emphasised their role and gave recommendations to what stakeholders could do. They recognised the need to strengthen policies and plans to mitigate disaster risks and promote resilience in inclusive approaches. In this webinar, apart from presenting the key findings of the consultation, children & youth delegations also share their experience participating in DRR work, as well to have direct dialogue with representatives of government, UN & INGOs on actions to be taken. Learning and challenges on planning and implementing child focused DRR work are also shared.

ANNEX 2: SCHEDULE OF ENQUIRY FOR SURVEY

Introduction page

While Asia-Pacific region grapples with the Covid-19 pandemic, humanitarian actors are also preparing and/or responding to natural disasters that have happened and will continue to happen in this disaster-prone region. The cascading effects of a pandemic, natural hazards and the impact of climate change can compound socio-economic vulnerabilities in many countries, and such a complex situation is becoming a new normal facing the most vulnerable populations in the region. The trend is consequently reshaping how to tackle ever-increasing and ever-complex disaster risks in the region, against the broader backdrop of ongoing debates around humanitarian system reform, localisation, the humanitarian-development-peace nexus and beyond. We are looking to draw out the trends of the past 5 years incorporating the World Humanitarian Summit and its commitment to the Grand Bargain, that will enable us to build a picture of the key trends and strategic responses required to respond to these over the next 5 to 10 years.

This survey forms part of the 2020 Regional Humanitarian Partnerships Events (RHPE), the online version of the previously convened Asia-Pacific Regional Humanitarian Partnerships Week usually held in Bangkok. The 2020 RHPE will be an online journey of 3 months of consultations, webinars and thematically focused online discussions, as well as this survey. It is being co-organised by the Asian Disaster Reduction and Response Network (ADRRN), International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA), UN Office for Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and Community World Service Asia (CWSA) supported by members and partners.

Confidentiality statement

You have been invited to participate in this survey because you are either a member of ADRRN, ICVA, CWSA and/or partnered with OCHA and based in Asia-Pacific, or you have engaged with the Regional NGO Partnerships Week held annually in Bangkok (up to November 2019) or the Regional Innovation Forum.

Your responses will be kept confidential, and any results of the survey shared will be anonymous – this means reports about the survey findings will not show your organisation name or responses individually.

This is a voluntary survey and not completing it will not affect your relationship with either ADRRN, ICVA, CWSA or OCHA. You have the right to withdraw your response at any time.

Please confirm you understand the purpose of the survey and consent to participation:

    a.   Yes
    b.   No

If you have questions about this survey, please contact Frances or Jim (provide emails)

Page 1: About you and your organisation/network

1. Where are you located (country drop down list)
2. Which of the list best describes your organisation
   a. International NGO
   b. National NGO
   c. Community Based Organisation nationally registered
   d. Community Based Organisation unregistered
   e. National Network

      f.   INGO/NNGO mixed network

      g.   Regional Network

      h.   International Network

      i.   UN Agency

      j.   Government

      k.   Academic

      l.   Other

3. Is this the headquarters or part of a wider organisational network
4. Size of your organisation

      Employees (if known):

      Volunteers (if known):

5. Your job title (optional)
6. Name of your organisation (optional)

[All responses in subsequent sections to be free form, that will be exported to Nvivo for coding in order to capture the trends emerging from the responses]

Page 2: Changing trends and regional context

1. What are the key trends in the sector (across different settings including disaster risk reduction / response, protracted crises and other complex humanitarian emergencies)?
2. What are the key strategic considerations in humanitarian response in the future for Asia-Pacific? (eg: climate change, DRR, Technology, Localisation etc)
3. What are do you see as the most important collective challenges and emerging opportunities at this time?
4. What has been the impact of Covid-19 in your view:
   a. at a regional level?
   b. at a national level?
   c. at a community level?
5. What are the essential shared values and principles we must adhere to in order to be more effective and coherent between now and 2030?

Page 3: Roles of actors for DRR and response

1. What is your perspective on the key roles of actors relevant to DRR and response? (For example: local and national government, communities, UN, Country Based Pooled Funds, donors etc)
2. What are the implications of the changes identified in the previous section (if there are any) in how crises will be responded to in the region?
3. How does the way in which actors work together need to change, to respond to the key trends and strategic considerations identified in the previous section?
4. Which groups of actors will or should gain importance in the region over the next 10 years? Please state which groups and why you draw that conclusion.
5. Which actors will or should have less importance in the region over the next 10 years? Please state which groups and why you draw that conclusion.

Page 4: Role of networks

1. What support would humanitarian actors (NNGOs, INGOs, UN and others) need from networks such as ADRRN and ICVA in the changing context?

2. What strategic considerations should networks such as ICVA and ADRRN focus on at a regional level, particularly in terms of coordination, advocacy, financing, building alliances and navigating changes?
3. Do you know of any networks in the region that we should be contacting – either pan-Asia-Pacific or country based networks?

Page 5: Thank you for participating

1. Thank you for participating in this survey. Would you be interested in talking with us further? We would only need an hour of your time to have an in depth interview. All the interviews will help us accurately describe the priorities of key actors in the region, and to better understand themes in the survey. We are scheduling a series of interviews after the Regional Consultation on 18th November. All responses will be anonymised unless you are happy to be quoted.
    a. Yes I would be interested
        i. Please provide your email
    b. No I would not be interested

ANNEX 3: SCHEDULE OF ENQUIRY FOR INTERVIEWS

This research aims to take stock in the diverse perspectives of key humanitarian actors-- local and national NGOs, INGOs, NGO networks, Red Cross and Crescent Movement, UN agencies, academics and beyond, on how emergency preparedness and humanitarian response are delivered in the changing context; and furthermore, to provide a comprehensive policy analysis on what it would mean to them in Asia-Pacific.

This is a part of the 2020 Regional NGO Partnership Events which took place virtually from October to December 2020. The event is normally held in Bangkok late November/early December bringing key humanitarian actors-- local and national NGOs, INGOs, NGO networks, Red Cross and Crescent Movement, UN agencies, academics and beyond to share their perspectives on how disaster risk reduction, emergency preparedness and humanitarian response should transform in the changing context. It started with a consultative meeting on 'the future of humanitarian response in Asia-Pacific', followed by various consultations and webinars, and myself and a colleague are undertaking further research that will culminate in a policy paper on the sector's future in the region. The 2020 Regional NGO Partnership Events is co-organised by Asian Disaster Reduction and Response Network (ADRRN), International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) Asia-Pacific office, UN Office for Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Bangkok office, and Community World Service Asia, supported by various members and partners from UN, I/NGOs and more.

1) What do you see as the emerging trends that will impact humanitarian response in the region from 2021?   Prompts: a.　　　Climate change - refugee flows, conflict?   b.　　　'Governmentalisation,' localisation and the dynamics associated with that?   c.　　　Availability and accessibility of funding for humanitarian response and for Disaster Risk Reduction?   d.　　　Does the possibility of whole cities being threatened by climate change or earthquakes mean that newer trends like focus on GBV, will be seen as less important?
2) How can we adapt to those trends, in Asia-Pacific, and in your part of humanitarian sector? How does the sector need to change and reform to cope with change? How is it failing and how is it succeeding?   Prompts: a.　　　Climate change - refugee flows, conflict?   b.　　　'Governmentalisation', localisation and the dynamics associated with that?   c.　　　Availability and accessibility of funding for humanitarian response and for Disaster Risk Reduction?   d.　　　Does the possibility of 'mega disasters' - whole cities being threatened by climate change or earthquakes - mean that newer, softer focuses like e.g. GBV, will be seen as less important?
3) Do you see new and emerging players and stakeholders in humanitarian response in the region? What impact are emerging players having on humanitarian response? How is this likely to evolve?   Prompts: a.　　　Private sector involvement?   b.　　　Is funding becoming more atomised and less collectivised? Less internationalised? More national provision? E.g. Jordan, Philippines.   c.　　　Who are the key regional actors who are most important?
Sub question: a) What are the skills the sector needs to have, and are skills evolving to meet emergent needs?
4) What impacts is Covid-19 having, and will it have, in your opinion? What are the challenges and the opportunities?   Prompt   a.　　　Have there been any positives, e.g. local organisations gaining more funding which would have gone into travel and INGOs etc?

5) Bearing in mind all of this, what should networks such as ADRRN and ICVA focus on, over the next few years?
6) As someone working in national government, what do you see its role being – for both DRR and response?
7) As someone who works in a regional centre, what do you see its role being – for both DRR and response? Are there other things you'd like to see your organisation do? And what would enable this?
8) As someone working in a nationally founded and based NGO, what do you see your role being – both for DRR and response? Are there other things you'd like to be doing and what would enable this?
9) as someone working in an international network, who has spent considerable time in Asia-Pacific, what do you think ICVA should be doing more of and what would the enablers be? What do you think ICVA's main strategic thrusts should be over the next 10 years?

Conclude by asking interviewees if they are happy to be referenced if we use their responses as quotes