

**ASEAN Regional Forum Disaster Relief Exercise (ARF DiREx) 2011**

**After Action Review (AAR)**

**Executive Summary & Conclusions**

**Manado, Indonesia, 19 March 2011**

**Executive Summary**

From 15 to 19 March 2011, Republic of Indonesia and Japan co-hosted the ASEAN Regional Forum Disaster Relief Exercise (ARF DiREx 2011). The activities of the ARF DiREx 2011 were held in Manado City, Maasing, Wori, Kimabajo, Minaesa Sam Ratulangi International Airport, Bunaken Island, Siladen Island and Mantehage Island. The ARF DiREx 2011 consisted of a Table Top Exercise (TTX), Field Training Exercise (FTX) and Humanitarian Civic Action (HCA). FTX consisted of an Urban Search and Rescue (USAR), Land Operations, Maritime Operations, Air Operations, and Medical Operations. HCA consisted of a Medical Civic Action Programme (MEDCAP) and Engineering Civic Action Programme (ENCAP). At the end of the Exercise, Co-Chairs convened an After Action Review (AAR).

From the ARF DiREx, the participants noted three common points:

1. That the ARF DiREx 2011 was a success, despite the devastating earthquake in Japan, the co-chair, on 11th March 2011. It advanced the progress made during the first ARF Voluntary Demonstration of Response (VDR), conducted in the Philippines in May 2009,.
2. That the ARF DiREx 2011 provided an opportunity for participants to enhance the cooperation and interoperability among ARF nations' civilian and military agencies at strategic, operational and tactical levels. In addition, the ARF DiREx 2011 allowed participants to enhance their ability to provide assets and personnel in a rapid, coordinated and effective manner, and;
3. That ARF should consider future exercises for disaster relief, and that the format as well as the scope for such future exercises should be determined at an appropriate stage.

The participants expressed their gratitude to the People and Provincial Government of North Sulawesi for the hospitality and the arrangement of the Exercise as well as the support and cooperation provided by them. It is clear, that such important and meaningful Exercise should have a positive impact on an increased

capacity and capability of local governments in implementing disaster management and relief operations.

### **Countries/Organizations Participating in the Exercise**

Seventeen countries and seven organizations participated in the TTX, FTX, and HCA. Those participating countries and international organizations are as follows:

1. Australia – TTX and USAR;
2. Canada – TTX;
3. China – TTX, Medical Ops and MEDCAP;
4. European Union – TTX, USAR, Medical Ops, CCC and MEDCAP
5. India – TTX, USAR, Maritime Ops, Air Ops;
6. Indonesia – TTX, USAR, Land Ops, Maritime Ops, Air Ops, Medical Ops, JOC, CCC, MCP, MEDCAP and ENCAP;
7. Japan – TTX, USAR, JOC, CCC and ENCAP;
8. Malaysia – TTX;
9. Mongolia – USAR;
10. New Zealand – TTX;
11. Papua New Guinea – TTX;
12. Philippines – TTX, ENCAP and MEDCAP;
13. Republic of Korea – TTX;
14. Singapore – TTX, USAR, Air Ops, CCC and MEDCAP;
15. Sri Lanka – TTX;
16. Thailand – TTX;
17. Timor-Leste – Medical Ops and MEDCAP;
18. United States of America – TTX;
19. ASEAN's Mechanisms – TTX, USAR, Land Ops and CCC;
20. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) – TTX;
21. United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) – TTX;
22. United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) – TTX;
23. United Nation World Food Programme (WFP) – TTX;
24. World Health Organization (WHO) – TTX.

Meanwhile, the following ARF Participants took part as observers of the Exercise:

1. Bangladesh;
2. Brunei Darussalam;
3. Cambodia
4. Myanmar
5. Pakistan
6. Russia;
7. Viet Nam;

### **Overview of the Exercise**

All participants confirmed that the ARF DiREx 2011 was a success and commented on the excellent works of the Government of the Republic of Indonesia and Japan in planning and preparing the ARF DiREx 2011. Although the exercises were complex, with dynamic interaction between various nations and international disaster-relief related organizations to execute the Exercise scenario, the participants did find the Exercise useful. It allowed them to interact with each other in a disaster relief Exercise, involving both civilian and military personnel and assets from ARF Participants.

### ***Table Top Exercise (TTX)***

TTX was held from March 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup>. Prior to the TTX, academic session was held on March 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> in which presentations were given by relevant officials to the TTX participants. The topics of presentation are as follows:

- The framework for disaster management and emergency response in the Republic of Indonesia (National Agency for Disaster Relief, Indonesia)
- An overview of ASEAN mechanism for disaster management and emergency response (ASEAN Secretariat)
- An overview of ARF mechanism for disaster management and emergency response (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Indonesia)
- Civil-Military Coordination (Indonesian National Army, Indonesia)
- The role of the humanitarian community in international disaster relief operation (UNOCHA)
- Key definitions, core responsibilities, regional and International support, initiation and other key legal matters (IFRC)

- Mapping service (Australia and Singapore)

During the TTX, participants focused on the following objectives:

- To identify effective disaster relief coordination mechanisms among ARF members;
- To improve civil-military coordination at an operational level (mobilization process, arrival, exit and so forth) among ARF Participants in the context of disaster relief;
- To identify the role of regional organizations such as ASEAN, ARF and international organizations such as UNOCHA in civil-military coordination mechanisms;
- To test and provide inputs to relevant ARF documents such as the ARF General Guidelines for Disaster Relief and the ARF Strategic Guidance for Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief.

#### **Field Training Exercise (FTX)**

Concurrently, the Field Training Exercise (FTX) was held from March 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup>. The demonstration of FTX was implemented on March 15<sup>th</sup> following the Opening Ceremony at Mega Mas Complex, Manado, North Sulawesi Province.

In Asia Pacific region, activities of disaster relief related exercises at the multinational level are limited, thus the FTX provided an important opportunity for all ARF Participants to test and improve their capacity and mechanism for disaster relief operation involving personnel and assets of various countries.

Six countries (Australia, India, Indonesia, Japan, Mongolia and Singapore) and two organizations (ASEAN's Mechanisms and European Union) participated in Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) exercises. USAR exercises consisted of three parts of training: Reception and Departure Center (RDC)-move, Field Assessment, and Search and Rescue operations (e.g. search and detection, breaching, and height rescue). Each training was controlled by sub-On-Site Operations Coordination Centre (OSOCC) manned by international participants, Exercise Controllers (Ex-Cons), Indonesian Search and Rescue National Agency/ *Badan Search and Rescue Nasional* (BASARNAS), ASEAN-Emergency Rapid Assessment Team (ERAT) .

Based on the scenario, the participants, mainly from the Indonesian National Army, local government and volunteers, engaged in Land Operations, such as Tsunami Drill, Land Medical Evacuation (Medevac), Field Hospital, Land Transportation, and so on.

The BASARNAS, Indian Navy, and Indonesian National Army participated in Maritime Operations. They delivered water to five exercise areas, and implemented maritime search and rescue.

Indian Navy, Singaporean Air Force and Indonesian National Army participated in Air Operations. Indonesia's C-130 aircraft air-dropped supplies for the affected people. Singapore's CH-47 helicopter and Indonesia's NAS-330 helicopter transported the injured. Indian Chetak and Indonesia's BO-105 helicopter carried out air search and rescue off the shore of Manado city. Singapore's CH-47 helicopter and Indonesia's NAS-330 helicopter transported supplies from Manado airport to Mantehage island, and from Wori Village to Megamall Area and to the Sam Ratulangi Airport. They also carried supplies from Sam Ratulangi Airport to Wori Village, back and forth. . Indonesia's C-212 aircraft completed the Mapping exercise.

Alongside the above exercises, MEDCAP and ENCAP were implemented. MEDCAP projects included General Practice, Dental examination, Cataract examination and surgery, Circumcision, Family Planning, Nutrition Supplement and Minor Surgery. Five Countries (China, Indonesia, the Philippines, Singapore and Timor-Leste) along with EU contributed to MEDCAP from March 14<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> at Bunaken Island, Mantehage Island, Maasing district and Wori village. The activities of ENCAP included construction of water purifier, pathway, and waste disposal. Following the above, participants noted in the After Action Review (AAR) the need to enhance civil-military coordination and multinational coordination, especially at the Combined Coordination Centre (CCC), in order to avoid overlap, minimize inconsistency, and to meet the assistance needs , such as coordination of when and where to dispatch troops. Participants of AAR commented that, while they were able to successfully plan and conduct the ARF DiREx 2011, it would be more difficult to find available assets which had not been committed for other events. Finally, participants in the ARF DiREx 2011 were in favor of continuing similar exercises in future years. While discussions on the scope and structure of a future ARF DiREx 2011 are yet to be determined, participants shared a common view that that the ARF DiREx 2011 was a useful event, allowing ARF nations to gather, share information and interact in the area of international disaster response.

### **Objective of the Exercise**

The ARF DiREx 2011, which is a civilian-led and military supported Exercise, was intended to advance the capacity for multinational disaster response which was accumulated in the ARF VDR. ARF DiREx 2011 was aimed at achieving the following:

1. To enhance confidence and mutual understanding among ARF Participants;
2. To develop cooperation and interoperability among ARF nations' civilian (including civil society organizations) and military agencies at strategic, operational and tactical levels;
3. To verify the effectiveness of the ARF Strategic Guidance for Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief and the ARF Model Arrangement on the Use of Military and Civilian Defense Assets (MCDA), in the context of the existing standard operating procedures/protocols of ASEAN, regional, international and the affected (host) nation pertaining to multinational disaster relief operations,
4. To advance the ARF Participants' ability to rapidly provide coordinated and effective disaster relief.
5. To advance the affected (host) state's ability to respond to Humanitarian Assistance requirements caused by natural disasters beyond the affected state's ability to provide adequate assistance to the affected area.

***Objective of the TTX***

1. To improve civil-military coordination, at an operational level (mobilization process, arrival, exit and so forth) among ARF Participants in the context of disaster relief.
2. To identify the role of regional organizations such as ASEAN, ARF and International Organizations such as UNOCHA in civil-military coordination mechanism; and
3. To test and provide inputs to relevant ARF documents such as the ARF General Guidelines for Disaster Relief and the ARF Strategic Guidance for Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief.

***Objective of the FTX***

1. To enhance confidence and mutual understanding among ARF Participants in the context of multinational disaster relief operations in the region;
2. To improve civilian-led and military-supported Disaster Relief operations and civil-military coordination at operational and tactical level;
3. To develop cooperation and interoperability among ARF nations' civilian (including civil society organizations) and military agencies at operational and

tactical level;

4. To strengthen the ability to provide humanitarian assistance needed by local people, among others, in the form of medical and rehabilitation services.

## **Conclusions & Recommendations**

1. The Exercise (ARF DiREx 2011) was successfully conducted. The ARF Participants which took part in the Exercise gained confidence in the field of disaster relief operation, throughout the policy coordination and international cooperation during the Exercise. Despite the encouraging undertakings, there are also some constraints and shortcomings which need to be taken into full attention and improved in organizing such Exercise. This could be seen in particular in relation with planning and operational aspects. We note that the Exercise was affected by the shocking earthquake and tsunami happened in Japan on 11 March 2011 (3 days before the Exercise). As a logical consequence, this unanticipated disaster has forced some countries (Japan, the United States and the Republic of Korea) to pull back their personnel and assets that were previously planned to participate in the Exercise. It ultimately required us to make some adjustments in the scenario. In the operational aspect, we have faced some considerable technical problems such as coordination, logistics, human resources, security, organizational and Standard Operating Procedures (SOP). It is therefore highly important to also conduct follow up activities in the field of disaster management to improve and utilize the progress made during the ARF DiREx 2011. As for lessons learned from both ARF VDR and AAR of this exercise, we suggest that we hold similar exercises with an interval of two years, while conducting TTX and other relevant activities in between, as extensive Exercises take more than a year to be well prepared.
2. The ARF DiREx 2011 has contributed to strengthening cooperation and enhancing interoperability among ARF nations' civilian and military agencies at the strategic, operational and tactical level. Effectiveness of civil-military cooperation among nations and agencies at all those levels is the key to improve disaster relief capacity. We recommend that we continue to conduct such exercises and to call for more participation and contribution in terms of assets, given that a comprehensive approach would make an exercise more realistic and effective.

3. Through ARF DiREx 2011, we shared the view on how to effectively conduct disaster relief operations not only among participating countries and organizations, but also UN agencies and other international institutions and/or local institutions. In order to consolidate what we gained through ARF DiREx 2011, we suggest that TTX should be elaborated in a way that the command and coordination aspect of the exercise correspond further to the real situation. From this perspective, with respect to the possibility of conducting Command Post Exercise (CPX), we recommend to use role-play methods in dealing with specific cases with a well defined scale and scope.
4. Briefing sessions on the TTX and FTX were held during the ARF DiREx 2011 explaining on several disaster relief mechanisms, for example, the ARF Strategic Guidelines for Humanitarian Assistance and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief, ASEAN Standard Operating Procedure for Regional Standby Arrangements and Coordination of Joint Disaster Relief and Emergency Response Operations as well as relevant Indonesian Laws on disaster relief. It is important for countries and agencies in the region to share views on disaster relief policy in an affected country, in order to effectively and rapidly address disasters. For a more effective and coordinated disaster relief operation in the South East Asia region, we also recommend to strengthen the function of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre) located in Jakarta, Indonesia.
5. Through ARF DiREx 2011, participating countries have enhanced their ability to provide assets and personnel in a coordinated manner. This kind of ability needs to be further developed. This could be achieved through the introduction of role playing methods as referred to in point 3 above, given that these methods require cooperation between civilian and military agencies, as well working in a multilateral setting.
6. Indonesia, the ARF DiREx 2011 co-chair, successfully enhanced its ability to meet the expected needs in case of disaster, in a timely and appropriate manner. Coordination activities involving national and international dimensions of the Exercise in Joint Operation Centre (JOC), Combined Coordination Centre (CCC) and Main Command Post (MCP), in addition to lessons learned through an effective TTX, have greatly contributed to the enhancement of Indonesia's capacity to encounter disasters. The coordination between the Central Government of Indonesia and the Local Government of



North Sulawesi, while some gaps were still found, was enhanced as a result of this Exercise. It is hoped that the Indonesian government will use the valuable lessons learned to further consolidate its disaster relief mechanism. We recommend that any future exercise of this kind be made even more effective, by analyzing the various lessons learned from countries which ever experienced large scale disasters, and countries and international organizations providing humanitarian assistance under disaster relief operations.

7. There is a need to ensure that similar Exercises from other existing regional mechanisms are not duplicating each other, and therefore should be mutually complementary and reinforcing each other.

### **Lessons Learned**

The following lessons learned were presented by the respective Working Groups or Participating countries at the 19th March 2011 AAR:

#### **A. TTX**

##### **a) Sustain:**

- TTX provided an effective forum for networking amongst a broad range of participants from various ARF Participants.
- The plenary provided an excellent opportunity for participants to develop an understanding of Indonesia's disaster management processes, new ASEAN disaster management initiatives (Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER), SASOP, AHA Centre), Donors' approaches to disaster relief, and Humanitarian Organizations approaches.

##### **b) Improve:**

- A simple SOP is required for enabling consular emergency activities and supports for affected foreign nationals in the event of a disaster;
- Publicizing the SASOPs and ARF Participants' national disaster management regulations and processes to support the role of AHA centre
- The relationship between the AADMER, SASOP and the AHA Centre and existing national and global disaster management structures requires further clarification.
- ARF should consider developing / adopting SOPs for disaster response. In

developing or adopting SOPs, consideration should be given to existing SOPs, including national regulations, ASEAN SASOP and UN mechanisms. Refining and extending ASEAN SASOPs to all ARF Participants may be considered.

c) Lessons-learned for next exercise:

- Future Exercises in the framework of ARF could play a role in clarifying how national, regional and global disaster management processes can work together more effectively.
- The inclusion of an attainable exercise component with a more integrated scenario, possibly one that explores cross border scenarios, would help us build on the achievements of ARF DiREx 2011.

**B. FTX**

a) Sustain:

- Morning brief & afternoon debrief were very useful to manage the entire operation.
- All activities with high risks were conducted without accident.
- Field commander (C2) was very effective.
- Joint Operations Centre (JOC) were well operated.
- Fine communication network was advantageous in supporting players action.
- All operations were accomplished with good methods of civil-military coordination.
- The establishment of CCC was useful and should be placed in the same space of host nation's MCP.

b) Improve:

- Main Command Post staffing & procedure did not run effectively. It requires improvement.
- Coordination mechanism between MCP and CCC were not performed properly.
- Lack of coordination between inter-agency in tactical & operational level.
- Need of sufficient exercise controllers to direct activities in line with the scenario.
- CCC should be made useful as a venue of sharing information.
- FTX scenario should be limited in the activate coordination scene.

c) Lessons-learned for next exercise:

- Provide job descriptions of the centre's staffs;
- Produce guidelines, standard operational procedure and regulations regarding coordination mechanism and field action;
- Organize regular joint training between agencies, from technical to tactical level as well as to operational level.
- Consolidate exercise methods to be more practically and easily implemented.
- CCC demonstration was useful for Indonesia's disaster relief agencies.

**C. USAR Working Group**

a) Sustain:

***(For Planning)***

- Burden sharing among working group members, i.e. participating countries, enabled swift mobilization of assets, e.g. procurement, financial support and so on.
- Cooperation and communication among working group members were essential in planning and controlling exercise. Blue Banter, the main exercise site, was ideal for the USAR exercise. With moderate size of buildings, teams and exercise controllers can easily communicate, as well as easily and swiftly access the site from the city center and hotels.
- As for the field assessment, formats and injections were fully prepared by Australian participants and was useful for the purpose.

***(For conducting exercise)***

- This exercise was precious opportunity for all participants, as USAR teams rarely conduct multinational joint exercise with actual mobilization of assets. As English is not the operational language in some of ARF Participants, it was a good experience for participating teams, as they are more aware of the possibility of communication difficulty in overseas deployment, especially in coordination with foreign teams.
- Participating Teams can learn from one other on their USAR techniques and team mobilization. On 17<sup>th</sup> of March, the search and detection module of the exercise was successfully conducted as an information sharing session, and served as ice breaking activity for participants.
- Sequence of the exercise was well arranged. Participants could get along

with each other during the field assessment activity prior to operational practices in Blue Banter.

b) Improve:

- Ice breaking session for all USAR participants should be held prior to the exercise.
- More radio sets were necessary for smoothly conducting exercise, especially the field assessment exercise.
- For the field assessment exercise, sample answers to the injections could have been helpful for players to develop mutual understanding as to the answers expected by ex-cons.
- The field assessment exercise could have been more realistic by using local residents, who only speak the local language, as informants.
- It may be useful to have virtual Base of Operation in order to ensure the reporting line between individual teams, team leaders and ex-cons.
- Communication log was necessary in sub-OSOCC to record radio communication with players on the field.
- As many changes happened during the exercise, it is essential that changes of timetable must be informed to players immediately in order to avoid confusion on the ground.

c) Lessons-learned for next exercise:

- Well advanced and well coordinated planning process of the host and participating countries led to the success of the Exercise.
- Ex-cons should respond quickly and flexibly to manage the entire exercise and to cope with many unexpected issues in the course of the exercise.
- It is always necessary to have alternative plans.
- An international event as important as this Exercise are likely to be opened and observed by VIP, therefore Co-chairs need to prepare VIP programs and protocol matters. Press and visitor arrangements should be put into consideration.
- Alternative plans are necessary in the event of weather change.
- Host country should ensure logistic supports.

**D. Medical Operations Working Group**

a) Sustain:

- MEDCAP activities had been conducted as planned.
- Local people participate and utilize with high enthusiasm the medical

services provided in MEDCAP.

- Regional government, local people and foreign participants cooperated and coordinated well during the Humanitarian Civic Actions.

b) Improve:

- The food distribution for the field doctors and nurses were not on time.
- The field hospitals were uncomfortable and did not have any air conditioner.
- The transportation to islands (using boat) was not comfortable.
- The rundown of the MEDCAP programme in Mantehage Island was highly dependent on the condition of sea tidal on the Island.

c) Lessons-learned for next exercise:

- The food distribution should be well arranged.
- Next MEDCAP should involve specialist doctors to avoid any misdiagnose by general doctors.
- On the next convening, the preparation of any activities, which also involved participants from other countries, should be well arranged.
- The medical and disposable goods should be available sufficiently.

## **E. Engineering Working Group**

a) Sustain:

- Indonesia, Japan and the Philippines had worked and coordinated very closely for engineering activities as a part of emergency relief activities. Indonesia, in particular the Indonesian Army and the Ministry of Public Works, played a significant role in the Programme and conducted a number of engineering activities, namely road construction, water purifier installment, and public toilet set-up in 18 sites. Indonesia and Philippines engineers had jointly constructed a rural road in Bunaken Island, as a lifeline, to deliver basic needs in emergency stage. Through ENCAP activities, participating countries had managed to build confidence and mutual understanding between military participants. Japan had granted Fund for a community hall renovation in Bunaken Island as part of Engineering Civic Action Programme.

b) Improve:

- In a Disaster Relief Exercise, government agencies generally played very important role. Nevertheless, under emergency relief stage, local community participation is equally essential, particularly to help figure

out needs of affected people on the ground. In addition, during reconstruction stage, inputs from local communities gained through dialogues with them are crucial to design a more disaster-resistant infrastructure. Therefore, planning process should include these significant components.

c) Lessons-learned for next exercise:

- Close dialogue with local community, particularly during IPC and FPC, is necessary, as it provides inputs for better planning, especially on the high priority projects needed in the area.

**F. Summary of each country's comments**

a) Sustain:

The Exercise was great success and has achieved the objectives of the Exercise.

b) Improve:

- ARF DiREx 2011 constitutes a valuable disaster relief exercise, and similar simulated disaster relief operation should be sustained involving greater participation and contribution in terms of personnel and assets, both civilian and military.
- Procedures of humanitarian assistance including recovery and rehabilitation should be further discussed.
- More opportunity for host country to cooperate with foreign countries and international organizations should be arranged.

c) Lessons-learned for next exercise:

- Clearer briefing for participants needs to be prepared and performed in the beginning of the Exercise.
- If possible, TTX will be conducted prior to, not simultaneously with, the FTX.