



Recipients of Relief Items in Vietnam, 2020 (Photo credits: Mercy Relief)

We are pleased to bring you the second issue of Beyond Relief!

While the current pandemic has changed work modalities, Singapore Humanitarian Network members have nevertheless been keeping themselves busy and productive. If anything, COVID-19 has reaffirmed and underscored the importance of the work that we do.

As the world grapples with the COVID-19 pandemic, the threat of natural hazards still looms large in the region. This issue's On the Ground features some of the relief efforts that Singaporean humanitarian organisations - Mercy Relief, World Vision Singapore, Relief Singapore - have undertaken in neighbouring Southeast Asian states.

On the academic front, our members have continued to publish articles and reports, covering a diverse range of topics including knowledge management in the humanitarian sector, counterfactual thinking in disaster risk modeling, and disaster governance.

We hope that the situation will improve soon so that we can resume our physical network meetings. In the meantime, stay healthy and safe!

As usual, we welcome your ideas, feedback and input and look forward to supporting joint efforts in research, networking and knowledge sharing. Do get in touch with either Christopher (christopherchen@ntu.edu.sg) or Al (iscook@ntu.edu.sg).



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ON THE GROUND

Mercy Relief: Southeast Asia Flood & Typhoon Relief

Mercy Relief responded to the torrential floods and storm surges in Vietnam & the Philippines on 11th November 2020. Due to the monsoon season, heavy downpours and tropical storms led to landslides and flash floods, leaving infrastructure wrecked and thousands displaced in Vietnam and the Philippines. In just over a month,

Vietnam was hit with six storms which caused widespread floods and landslides, leaving at least 239 people dead or missing and 1.5 million people directly affected and in need of clean water, food, medical care and shelter. Landfalls in the Philippines caused by Typhoon Goni, the world's strongest typhoon of 2020, killed at least 67 people and displaced over 408,000 people.

Mercy Relief worked with its ground partner,

Center for Water Resources Conservation and Development, to distribute relief packs to the affected communities in Vietnam. Each pack contained essentials such as rice, canned food, towels and hygiene kits. 700 relief packs, benefiting some 2500 individuals, were handed out to households in 5 villages in the Quang Binh Province. Tables, chairs and blackboards were also distributed to five schools, benefiting some 2080 children.

In the Philippines, Mercy Relief partnered with the Citizens' Disaster Response Center, the Southern Tier Pregnancy Resource Center & TABI to provide emergency relief aid - food packs, clean water, hygiene kits, blankets and tarpaulins - to the affected communities. A total of 522 relief packs benefiting some 1972 individuals were handed out to households in the Catanduanes & Quezon Provinces.

World Vision Singapore: Emergency Aid and Early Recovery Programme for Households Affected by Typhoons Molave, Goni and Vamco in the Philippines and Vietnam

At the end of 2020, the Philippines and Vietnam suffered from an onslaught of multiple typhoons. In October and November alone, both countries each experienced eight storms and severe flooding. This included Typhoon Molave which was the strongest storm to hit Vietnam in 20 years as well as Super Typhoon Goni which had wind strengths

comparable to that of Typhoon Haiyan when it made landfall in the Philippines.

Following the landfalls of typhoons Molave, Goni, and Vamco, World Vision Singapore launched an emergency appeal to provide immediate aid to survivors. Since then, with the support of local and international donors, World Vision has been able to assist more than 37,500 individuals in both countries. This included the provision of relief items like food (such as rice, pork, cooking oil, fish sauce, basic cooking, and eating utensils); hygiene kits (toothbrush, toothpaste, bath and laundry soaps, underwear, nail cutter, and sanitary pads); other non-food items (like mosquito nets, plastic mats, blanket, and collapsible water containers); and emergency shelter kits (tarpaulins and rope), especially for those whose houses were totally damaged.

World Vision's main response goals are to increase families' access to life-saving relief items to ensure the continuity of their daily lives as well as to restore their capacity

to earn a living to pre-typhoon levels. As the response transitions from relief to recovery phase, World Vision is seeking more resources to better assist the affected households in rebuilding their lives. Integration with World Vision's long-term livelihoods program will be considered based on the family's actual needs in order to bring about sustainable impact.

Relief Singapore: COVID-19 and Rohingya Crisis Responses

Relief Singapore (RSG) is currently facilitating the donation of ventilators to hospitals in ASEAN and beyond that require these devices to treat COVID-19 patients. The distribution of reusable masks to Rohingya children, youths and elderly in all 34 camps in Cox's Bazar was successfully completed last October. RSG continues to monitor the situation in the camps, which saw recent fires that destroyed many homes and camp facilities.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

News Articles and Commentaries

Working together on relief can stop a China-India border disaster

Lina Gong

The Interpreter

28 September 2020

Click [here](#) to read more.

HADR in Southeast Asia: unpacking the military's humanitarian role

Angelo Paolo Trias and Alistair D.B. Cook

RSIS Commentaries

23 October 2020

Click [here](#) to read more.

Re-evaluating the military's role in disaster response

S. Nanthini

The Interpreter

27 January 2021

Click [here](#) to read more.

Journal Articles

Modeling downward counterfactual events: unrealized disasters and why they matter

Yolanda C. Lin, Susanna F. Jenkins, Jun Rui Chow, Sebastien Biass, Gordon Woo, and David Lallemand

Frontiers in Earth Science, 8 (575048), 2020

Click [here](#) to read more.

Rethinking relief, reconstruction and development: evaluating the effectiveness and sustainability of post-disaster livelihood aid

Patrick Daly, Saiful Mahdi, Jamie McCaughey, Ibnu Mundzir, Agus Halim, Nizamuddin, Ardiansyah, and Eka Srimulyani

International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction, 49, 2020

Click [here](#) to read more.

Disaster governance and prospects of inter-regional partnership in the Asia-Pacific

Alistair D.B. Cook and Christopher Chen

The Pacific Review, 2020

Click [here](#) to read more (contact authors for free copy).

Knowledge management and humanitarian organisations in the Asia-Pacific: practices, challenges, and future pathways

Mely Caballero-Anthony, Alistair D.B. Cook, and Christopher Chen

International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction, 53, 2021

Click [here](#) to read more (contact authors for free copy).

Books

Designing Emergency Management: China's Post-SARS Experience, 2003-2012

Lim Wee Kiat

Routledge, 2020

Click [here](#) to read more.

Humanitarianism in the Asia-Pacific: Engaging the Debate in Policy and Practice

Alistair D.B. Cook and Lina Gong (eds.)

Springer, 2021

Click [here](#) to read more.

Reports

Guardians of the Planet: Asia Pacific Children and Youth Voice on Climate Crisis and Disaster Risk Reduction

World Vision International

August 2020

Click [here](#) to read more.

The COVID-19 Catalyst: Implications for Disaster Governance in ASEAN

Lina Gong and S. Nanthini

NTS Insight

December 2020

Click [here](#) to read more.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Webinar by Dr Kilian Spandler: Saving People or Saving Face? Narratives and the Humanitarian Order in Southeast Asia



On 17 November 2020, the Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Programme of the Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies (NTS Centre) at RSIS hosted a webinar titled “Saving People or Saving Face? Narratives and the Humanitarian Order in Southeast Asia”. The webinar was delivered by Dr Kilian Spandler, Researcher, School of Global Studies, University of Gothenburg, Sweden. The presentation was based on his recently published journal article in The Pacific Review, and the session was moderated by Dr Alistair D.B. Cook, Coordinator of the HADR Programme and Senior Fellow, NTS Centre.

Dr Spandler’s research aimed to answer the following key question: Why is there so much uncertainty in the regional governance of HADR in the Southeast Asian region? Using narrative analysis as a theoretical framework, he investigated how different agents construct the role of the

AHA Centre through different narratives. In doing so, he argued that competing narratives serve to hamper the formation of a more coherent regional architecture for humanitarian governance, and that a regional humanitarian community does not yet exist in the region. Rather, various humanitarian networks exist, which require a more unifying, overarching narrative for them to coalesce into a community. His findings question traditional hegemonic liberal ideas about the regional humanitarian system, which have implications on authority relations and roles and responsibilities of humanitarian actors.

Watch the webinar recording [here](#).

Fundraiser: Grateful Hearts 2021

From March to May 2021, the Singapore Red Cross will be organising its annual fundraiser event—Grateful Hearts. It presents a meaningful opportunity to come together as a family, friends, colleagues or like-minded persons to raise funds for our local humanitarian services.

Please donate generously to the SRC’s local humanitarian efforts, to uplift the lives of the elderly, disabled, and those struggling financially in our midst.

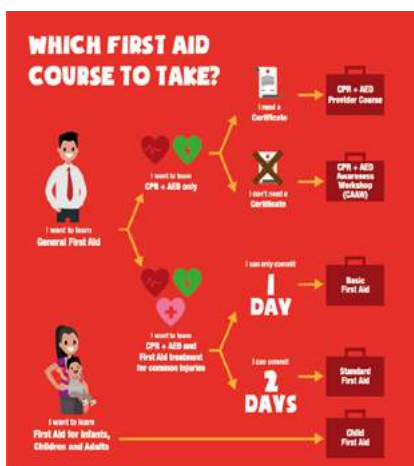
Make an online donation at <https://www.redcross.sg/>.

New Initiative: Fighting Climate Change for Disaster Risk Reduction

World Vision Singapore has launched its new Fight Climate Change initiative to protect the most vulnerable communities from climate-related disasters. This initiative marks World Vision’s commitment to empowering and providing vulnerable communities with sustainable, innovative, and eco-friendly solutions that concurrently protect people and the planet. This is done through projects that are related to climate change mitigation, adaption, and natural resource management. In 2021, World Vision will be embarking on projects such as installing solar water kiosks and eco-friendly toilets with water recycling capabilities in drought-stricken Mongolia, encouraging the uptake of clean cookstoves in Vietnam, as well as tree planting and improving the Abaca value chain in the Philippines to minimise the use of non-biodegradable waste. World Vision’s Fight Climate Change initiative aims to safeguard the futures of 100,000 children and protect the environment by reducing 15,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide by 2023.

For more details: <https://children.worldvision.org.sg/fightclimatechange>

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES AND TRAINING PROGRAMMES



First Aid Courses by the Singapore Red Cross

Over the years, Singapore Red Cross has continued to champion first aid training. As the country’s leading first aid training provider, Singapore Red Cross endeavours to equip more people with basic first aid knowledge to empower individuals to save lives.

Working towards the national goal of having a first aider in every home, the Singapore Red Cross Academy has developed a series

of first aid courses to cater to all ages and varied needs. With the Academy’s myriad health and life support courses, individuals can be better prepared to take effective and immediate actions.

CPR and AED Awareness Workshop (CAAW) courses are provided free of charge to Singaporeans and Permanent Residents.

[Click here](#) for more details and course dates.