RCG Background

The Asia-Pacific series of Conferences on Military Assistance to Disaster Relief Operations (APC-MADRO) that took place over a five-year period (2005-2010), were organised with the aim of developing collaborative Guidelines to assist the planning of foreign military assistance in support of disaster response operations in the Asia-Pacific region. At the end of this process, the Asia-Pacific Regional Guidelines for the Use of Foreign Military Assets in Natural Disaster Response Operations (APC Madro Guidelines) were finalized and endorsed.

Building upon the outcomes of the Asia-Pacific series of Conferences and related Guidelines, a multi-stakeholder Regional Consultative Group (RCG) on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination for Asia and the Pacific was formed in 2014 to act as a regional forum that brings together the humanitarian, civilian and military actors involved in disaster response preparedness planning and disaster response in the region. As outlined in the RCG Terms of Reference, the RCG was formed to: a) discuss response preparedness planning, with a focus on coordination of operational planning between civilian and military actors; b) facilitate exchange of information and innovative ideas to enable well-coordinated and needs-based effective disaster response to a broad range of humanitarian emergency operations; c) strengthen linkages with other relevant platforms with an emphasis on the relationship with Regional Organizations and the Global Consultative Group on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination. The chairmanship of the RCG is rotated among Member States on an annual basis.

The Second Session of the RCG took place on 11-12 October 2016 at the United Nations Building, Rajadamnern Avenue, Bangkok, Thailand. The event was chaired by the Government of the Philippines and, continuing to build on the outcomes of the RCG First Session (2015), addressed key issues that are central to advancing the civil-military coordination agenda in Asia and the Pacific.

“The humanitarian system must ensure there is an established platform which fosters dialogue, interaction, information exchange, and joint planning at all levels. The RCG on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination provides the opportunity to advance multi-agency and multi-sector response planning.”

Undersecretary Ricardo B. Jalad, Executive Director NDRRMC and Administrator OCD, Government of the Philippines

The Government of Singapore, represented by the Ministry of Defence (MINDEF) and the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) chaired the RCG in 2017 and hosted the RCG Third Session from 5 to 6 December 2017 at the SAF’s Changi Regional Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Coordination Centre (RHCC). The event was organised with the support of the RCG Secretariat, represented by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA) Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP), and the United States Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (US CFE-DM). The Third Session was attended by more than 130 participants from 26 countries and 24 regional/international organisations, academia and the private sector.
Summary of the RCG Third Session

RCG – Tuesday 5 December

The RCG opening session took place on Tuesday 5 December in the presence of Singapore’s Permanent Secretary (Defence), Mr. Chan Yeng Kit, and Mr. Rudolf Müller, Director OCHA Geneva. In his opening remarks, Mr. Chan Yeng Kit highlighted the need for humanitarian practitioners to tap on technology to improve disaster response. He shared how the Changi RHCC has used technology, such as its OPERA Computer Information System, to facilitate military-to-military Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) coordination in the region. Given the importance of technology as an enabler for HADR, the RCG Third Session featured a dedicated panel discussion on how civil and military actors can leverage humanitarian technology.

“Effective disaster response ultimately relies on the effective coordination and cooperation among the various humanitarian organizations in theatre. Mutual trust and interoperability form the foundation for this, but it cannot be built overnight. Militaries and civil agencies have to build stronger ties and come together more frequently for exchanges and exercises to strengthen our multilateral responses to disasters.”

Mr. Chan Yeng Kit, Singapore’s Permanent Secretary (Defence)

Mr. Chan Yeng Kit also highlighted the need to build a strong foundation of mutual trust and interoperability between humanitarian stakeholders. Thus, Singapore’s key thrust in the 2017 chairmanship of the RCG was to strengthen civil-military cooperation in the region.

Mr. Rudolf Müller, Director OCHA Geneva

“Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination is by definition performed under trying circumstances, either in the context of large-scale natural disasters or complex emergencies. There is no doubt that the Regional Consultative Group represents a unique opportunity for all of us who have traveled far and wide to bring forward the civil-military coordination agenda in the region. Asia-Pacific has positioned itself at the forefront by being the only region that has formed a Consultative Group that focuses on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination.”

Mr. Rudolf Müller, Director OCHA Geneva
Panel: RCG on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination (UN-CMCoord) for Asia and the Pacific: 2017 Work Plans

The objective of this session was to discuss how civil-military coordination can support disaster preparedness and ensure effective operational readiness. During the RCG First Session (2015), members agreed that when discussing civil-military coordination, it would have been very useful for selected RCG countries to develop country-level work plans that would outline how civil-military coordination would plug into and contribute to response preparedness efforts. As a result of the RCG Second Session (2016), RCG members continued to focus and further develop these work plans, better identifying how civil-military coordination could contribute to increasing the speed, volume and quality of life-saving assistance provided in the initial phase of a response and by augmenting nationally-led efforts.

Disaster Impact Model (DIM): Experience of conducting preparedness and response in Asia-Pacific has shown that secondary data can be effectively utilized to build an accurate picture of vulnerabilities, even before a disaster occurs. Using data such as shake maps, typhoon tracks and wave patterns, alongside population and housing data, disaster impact models can be created during the preparedness phase that can be updated when a disaster occurs. These models assist government, the humanitarian community as well as military and police actors to calculate estimates of the number of people affected by a specific disaster, as well as how many would most likely require humanitarian assistance, as a means of informing more accurate initial response planning.

Needs Analysis: Once a DIM is developed, a Needs Analysis process is undertaken to understand and prioritize humanitarian needs. An understanding of the full requirement of needs, and the ‘Key Immediate Needs’ that will be delivered in the first four to six weeks, ensures that the government, the humanitarian community and military/police actors can develop a coordinated contingency plan during the preparedness phase.
Panel: 2017 RCG Work Plans

Response Capacity Analysis: A Capacity Assessment allows for a more accurate understanding of how identified needs will be met and by whom. In Asia-Pacific, local communities, governments and militaries are the first responders, and it is important to understand the specific roles they play and how the international community can best augment their efforts. The specific focus of the RCG is to identify what would be the comparative advantage and value added of military actors in meeting the identified needs, determining what military functions, appropriate relief tasks, and effects may be required by the military to support civilian-led response efforts and ensure the rapid delivery against identified key humanitarian needs.

Response Modalities involve identifying how assistance will be delivered, based on existing capacities as well as operational constraints. The RCG dialogue is key to highlight what potential infrastructure barriers or logistic bottlenecks there may be in meeting the needs of people affected, as identified by the DIM. This should inform discussions with military actors on the mobilization of unique capabilities to overcome these challenges.

With an increasing number of governments in the region having their own disaster management agencies and corresponding national disaster coordination structures, efforts are focused on adapting the humanitarian Coordination Architecture to the specific national contexts. In a response that is ‘as local as possible and as international as necessary’, the objective is to have a coordination architecture that is tailored, flexible and inclusive of the role of the military and police, as key operational partners for humanitarian action.

Following this initial introduction, Government representatives from each of the RCG priority countries (Bangladesh, Indonesia, Myanmar, Nepal and the Philippines) outlined progress made against their respective RCG work plans.

BANGLADESH
The Government of Bangladesh 2017 work plan focused on preparedness efforts for a large-scale earthquake in Bangladesh (Sylhet, Chittagong, Dhaka) and the development of a related Disaster Impact Model (DIM). The Damage & Need Assessment (DNA) system and the 72-hour rapid assessment methodology developed by the Needs Assessment Working Group (NAWG) were identified as key tools to determine the ‘key immediate needs’ against the DIM in Bangladesh. Furthermore in 2017, the Government, with the support of humanitarian partners, continued to work on the revision of the national coordination architecture, focusing efforts in better understanding how the military-to-military as well as the civil-military coordination mechanisms could be implemented and tailored to the specific context of Bangladesh. Important elements of this process were: a) Approval by the National Disaster Management Council of the National Emergency Operation Center (NEOC) concept and : b) Revision of the Standing Orders on Disasters (SOD, 2010), to include the activation of military-to-military (MNCC) and Civil-Military Coordination Platforms (HuMOCC), as well as provisions for a Request for Assistance (RFA) process for the use of Foreign Military Assets (FMA) in support of disaster relief efforts. The Armed Forces Division (AFD) highlighted the key outcomes of the 8th Disaster Response Exercise and Exchange (DREE) that was conducted in October 2017.

INDONESIA
In 2017, the Government of Indonesia finalised the National Disaster Response Framework (NDRF), Indonesia’s primary guidance document for all stakeholders involved in disaster response at all levels of government and society. The NDRF clarifies roles, responsibilities, and organizational structure for response to disasters and emergencies in Indonesia. The Government of Indonesia, ASEAN and humanitarian agencies finalised in 2017 all the stages to ensure an effective and timely disaster response (DIM, Needs Analysis, Response Capacity Analysis, Planning and Advocacy). The resulting contingency plan will be tested in 2018 during the ASEAN Regional Disaster Emergency Response Simulation Exercise (ARDEX). Over the last year, the BNPB-led Technical Working Group (TWG) on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination continued to meet and agreement was reached that Foreign Military Assets (FMA) in Indonesia will be coordinated by the Ministry of Defence through the Multi-Agency Coordination Center (MAC). Detailed Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the MAC are being developed. Finally, under the leadership of BNPB, the focus of the 2017 work plan was on the operationalisation of the One ASEAN One Response Declaration, including through engagement in relevant simulation exercises.

MYANMAR
A key component of the 2017 work plan focused on capacity building in Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination. Senior officials/chief of operations from all the 14 military regional commands attended a civil-military coordination sensitization workshop that took place in Naypyitaw, Myanmar. Furthermore, selected representatives from the Relief and Resettlement Department (RRD) and the military attended the UN-CMC Coord Regional Courses that took place in Bangladesh (March 2017) and Sri Lanka (October 2017). As next steps, the Government of Myanmar is planning to develop a Disaster Impact Model based on a cyclone.
Panel: 2017 RCG Work Plans

In 2017, the Government of Nepal further refined the Disaster Impact Model (DIM) and Key Immediate Needs (KIN) focusing on a large-scale earthquake in western Nepal. This DIM was originally developed by Durham University in collaboration with the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) and humanitarian partners. For the Response Modalities, the Government of Nepal engaged in several policy developments to include: 1) Finalisation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the Multinational Military Coordination Center (MNMC); 2) Drafting of national Guidelines for International Assistance; 3) Revision of the National Disaster Response Framework (NDRF). Furthermore, an important focus of the 2017 work plan was placed on the development of the new National Disaster Risk Reduction Policy & Strategic Action Plan (2017-2030). The document represents the main policy reference to guide the resilience building agenda in Nepal and guide the formulation of cross-sectoral policies and legislations. Key provisions of the new legal framework related to civil-military coordination include: the creation of a Disaster Response Flying Squad Team, the definition of roles, responsibilities and authority of security agencies, and provisions related to foreign military assistance.

In 2017, the Government of the Philippines worked to further refine the Disaster Impact Model (DIM) focused on a 7.2 earthquake scenario in Metro Manila. The Response Modalities outlined how the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) with its unique capabilities and assets would provide support to the National Disaster Risk Reduction & Management Council (NDRRMC) through three distinct phases: 1) Disaster Preparedness; 2) Disaster response; 3) Disaster Rehabilitation and Recovery. In relation to the Coordination Architecture, military-to-military coordination focused on the development of temporary Status of Forces Agreements (SOFAs) during emergencies to stipulate the terms of reference assisting countries’ foreign military forces.

Guidelines on the activation and conduct of operations of the Multinational Coordination Centre (MNCC) and the Civil-Military Coordination Center (CMCC) were also developed. Civil-Military Coordination (led by the Office of Civil Defence) focused on capacity building with UN-CMCoord training for AFP officers at the General Headquarters and Field Command level. In terms of next steps, the Government of the Philippines is planning to develop country-specific Guidelines on the Use of Foreign Military Assets (FMA) during natural disaster, including tracking and requests for assistance. The establishment of a platform to share relevant pre-disaster information is also considered one of the key priorities.

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The objectives of this session were: a) To raise awareness of coordination platforms that can be activated during disaster response; b) To analyse and discuss opportunities and challenges in the civil-military interface for each of these platforms; c) To review how to create/strengthen linkages among them. The panel started with a presentation in plenary to outline the key roles/functions of each of the coordination mechanisms.

The On-Site Operations Coordination Centre (OSOCC) is a rapid response tool that provides a platform for the coordination of international response activities in the immediate aftermath of a sudden onset emergency or a rapid change in a complex emergency. It is at the same time both a methodology and a physical location for on-site emergency response coordination. The OSOCC is designed to work in support of the Government of the affected country and provides a platform and methodology for operational coordination on-site in a disaster area when other structures for international assistance and coordination, such as clusters or a nationally established structure that incorporates international actors, are not yet functioning. The nature of the OSOCC enables the concept to be utilized by other organizations when responding to emergencies, including international response organizations, e.g., regional organizations, and governments.

The USAR Coordination Cell (UCC) is a specialised cell in the Operations function of an OSOCC, to assist with and strengthen the coordination of international USAR teams during the rescue phase of a disaster. The UCC is manned by international USAR team members and staff from the UNDAC team. Members of international USAR teams will be included in a UCC to augment and complement the UNDAC team to facilitate operational USAR planning. The UCC will be responsible for supporting national authorities with planning and tasking of teams in the initial life-saving rescue phases. In USAR operations, each international relief team should, if required, second a team member as an UCC liaison to work within the UCC.

Emergency Medical Team Coordination Cell (EMTCC): Following sudden onset disasters, Emergency Medical Teams (EMTs) often arrive in-country to provide emergency care to patients with traumatic injuries and other life-threatening conditions. The EMTCC is a dedicated cell of the OSOCC that may operate semi-detached from the OSOCC, and, in some cases be established and operated by the Ministry of Health.

Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination: When an UNDAC team deploys (or pre-deploys) in an emergency and military actors are present, the UN-CMCoord focal point or dedicated officer in the OSOCC takes responsibility for assessing and establishing the initial interface with military actors, both national and foreign. Should the number of actors and identified needs increase significantly, a shift from the OSOCC-based approach to a dedicated Humanitarian-Military Operations Coordination Concept (HuMOCC) may be deemed necessary. The HuMOCC, comprising humanitarian and military representatives, will remain linked to the OSOCC and/or sub-OSOCCs. In such cases, the HuMOCC will be led by the NDMO with support from UN-CMCoord officers. Its main purpose is to further facilitate information sharing, joint planning and task division between humanitarian actors, through the clusters, and military actors.

Multinational Coordination Centre (MNCC): As outlined in the Multinational Force Standing Operating Procedures (MNF SOPs), the MNCC is established by the disaster Affected State to provide a center for all foreign assisting militaries to coordinate and plan operations with full information sharing relative to the ongoing operations and respective nations participation. The MNCC is an essential organization that integrates multinational partners in support of Multinational Force (MNF) contingency operations. The MNCC aids coordination of participating MNF military contributions to achieve unity of effort and avoid duplication of assistance during disaster responses.
Panel: Coordination Architecture in Disaster Response

At the end of the introductory part, participants joined one of the working groups based on the above outlined coordination platforms. The following key findings were then presented in plenary:

On-site Operations and Coordination Cell (OSOCC): The OSOCC is one of the key tools in support of Government-led response efforts. As such, it should be tailored to the national coordination architecture and offer services that are requested by the national authorities. An important focus is currently placed on ensuring a good level of inter-operability between regional and international platforms.

USAR Coordination Cell (UCC)/ Emergency Medical Team Coordination Cell (EMTCC): Both these platforms provide technical operation expertise in support of national authorities and are becoming increasingly relevant, especially in emerging operating environments such as complex emergencies and pandemics. A set of clearly defined minimum standards apply to both Search and Rescue (USAR) and Emergency Medical Teams (EMT). Linkages and coordination with other platforms (Regional/MNCC/UCC/RDC) still need to be further explored. In the specific case of the EMTCC, linkages with the Health Cluster coordination need to be discussed and defined.

Multinational Coordination Centre (MNCC): The key role of the platform is to facilitate military-to-military coordination of disaster responses under the overall direction of the affected state military. The MNCC will issue coordinating instructions in consultation with the assisting foreign militaries, who will retain command and control over their respective national contributions. The establishment of the MNCC should be context-specific and the geopolitical situation in particular countries can influence and determine which functions within the MNCC are activated. Recent disaster response operations highlighted as a good practice that liaison officers from the humanitarian community (OCHA, WFP, etc.) should be seconded to the MNCC to facilitate information sharing and create joint situational awareness. Similarly, dedicated military liaison officers should be seconded to key humanitarian coordination platforms (OSOCC, HCT, etc.). In some contexts, depending on the nature and scale of the disaster, there might be the need to augment this civil-military liaison function to be able to undertake more complex civil-military coordination tasks. In this case, a dedicated Humanitarian-Military Operations Coordination Concept (HuMOCC) can be activated under the leadership of the NDMO. In the HuMOCC, Government, humanitarian actors and militaries are co-located to ensure optimal information sharing, task division and coordination of operational planning. In relation to EMT and USAR teams, the MNCC will similarly issue coordinating instructions for foreign military medical and USAR teams in consultation with the EMTCC and UCC respectively, as well as the assisting foreign militaries.

Humanitarian-Military Operations Coordination Concept (HuMOCC): A Government-led (NDMO) predictable coordination platform to support specific civil-military functions and services:

- Facilitate effective and coherent sharing of information
- Contribute to achieving common situational awareness
- Advise on the appropriate foreign military assets (FMA) to be deployed/employed
- Contribute to establishing a needs-based and demand-driven system
- Provide a structure for host nation/humanitarian actors to define priorities and needs, and military actors to plan/execute requests for assistance (RFA) for use of FMA; and
- Facilitate development of realistic indicators and benchmarks – assist with transition planning.

The implementation of the HuMOCC is context-specific and its activation is based on the nature and scale of the disaster.

Key linkages between the HuMOCC and the UCC/EMTCC include:

- a) Tracking of requests, allocation and fulfillment of tasks; b) Logistic support to sustain EMT and USAR teams once deployed; c) Support for medevac for extraction of casualties; d) Expedite military support for technical/satellite imagery for SAR; e) Facilitate the transition phase and the exit planning of international teams; f) Deployment of FMA to support EMTs; g) Gap identification in the overall disaster response operation.
Panel: UN-CMCoord Regional Updates

The objective of this session was to outline latest trends and projects in Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination in the region.

**ASEAN/AHA Centre:** The presentation focused on the inclusion of the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the Utilization of Military Assets for Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief under the Framework of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Responses as Chapter VI of the SOP for Regional Standby Arrangements and Coordination of Joint Disaster Relief and Emergency Response Operations (SASOP). The SOP on the utilization of military assets had been jointly developed by the Singapore and Indonesian Armed Forces in consultation with other ASEAN armed forces. Its inclusion into SASOP was endorsed by the 9th ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting (ADMM) in March 2015 and adopted by the 29th ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management in October 2016. The concept of an ASEAN Military Ready Group (AMRG) as a regional tool that can be rapidly deployed to areas of crisis under a single ASEAN banner and with the coordination of the AHA Centre was also outlined.

**Asia Pacific Red Cross Red Crescent (RCRC) Civil and Military Relations Forum:** The briefing outlined the key outcomes of the 2nd Civil and Military Relations Forum that took place from 2 to 6 October 2017 in Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia). Of particular note was the output related to the development of a dedicated Asia-Pacific RCRC roadmap on civil-military relations (CMR), with the drafting of a CMR Handbook (Spring 2018), a CMR Training Module – Focal Points (Spring 2018) and the establishment of a RCRC Regional CMR Working Group.

**Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination in the context of Pakistan:** Following an initial outline on the context and key actors in Pakistan, the presentation focused on the coordination architecture and civil-military liaison arrangements that is applied in Pakistan as a unified mechanism regardless of the type of disaster. The final part of the session focused on lessons learned and challenges in Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination, including the need to conduct a joint table top/simulation exercise and the plan to establish a joint forum to undertake Rescue & Relief Operations.

**The Marawi Siege – AFP Counter Violent Extremism Operations:** The presentation started with an overview of the context of the Marawi Siege. It was then highlighted that a whole of government response through Task Force Bangon Marawi was organized to provide aid and shelter to internally-displaced persons and, eventually, reconstruct, rebuild, and rehabilitate the city. With the support from the international community, the Government of the Philippines was able to contain, constrict and neutralize the pro-Daesh forces within Marawi. On 18 October 2017, President Duterte addressed the troops in Marawi and declared the city as liberated from the terrorist influence. One of the key messages of the briefing was that the defeat of the terrorists in Marawi proves that violent extremism can be addressed through close collaboration among local and international communities.
Lessons Learned from HADR Exercises

RCG – Wednesday 6 December

During the RCG mid-term consultation (June 2017), RCG members discussed that one of the topics to be addressed during the RCG Third Session should focus on lessons learned from Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) exercises conducted in 2017. Following the RCG mid-term consultation, a survey was launched to collect RCG member’s feedback on HADR exercises. Questions posed to the RCG membership included issues such as Exercise Overview and Scenario; Key Exercise Objectives; Key Exercise Takeaways; Methodology to incorporate in future exercises (www.surveymonkey.com/r/RCG3Session).

It was highlighted that RCG members should be better at sharing lessons learned from exercises across countries. As lessons learned from disaster responses are shared on a regular basis, the same should apply to exercises so that RCG members can learn from these experiences.

As part of the RCG Third Session, the Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (CFE-DM) presented some of the key findings from the RCG survey and summarized the lessons learned from recent HADR exercises, including:

- **BANGLADESH**: Disaster Response Exercise and Exchange (DREE, 2017)
- **INDONESIA**: Tempest Express-30 (2017)
- **MYANMAR**: Lower Mekong Initiative (DREE, 2016)
- **NEPAL**: Tempest Express-28 (2017)
- **PHILIPPINES**: Balikatan (2017)
- **SINGAPORE**: Exercise Coordinated Response (EXCOORES, 2017)

The overview of the findings was organized according to three key areas: 1) Participation; 2) Training and 3) Construct.

1. **Participation**: Involvement of the humanitarian community, especially NGOs should be encouraged, to add a value of realism and bring exercises to life. Funding for non-military role players should be allocated to facilitate early engagement and overall participation. There should be a balanced participation between NDMO representatives and military personnel. Regional participation in exercises can increase understanding of foreign military assets and their capabilities.

2. **Training**: More time should be dedicated to pre-exercise activities, for example academic sessions and training to cover issues such as roles and functions of civil-military coordination platforms, logistics, roles of exercise participants, battle rhythm, planning. The complexities of real world operational realities should be considered when developing training concepts.

3. **Construct**: Most exercises focus on natural disasters, with limited coverage of complex emergency settings. It was highlighted that the focus should be primarily on humanitarian disaster response as an operational condition of a war-fighting (armed conflict) scenario. It is essential to have the right people in the right role so that exercise participants perform the same roles they have in their professional life, adding realism to the exercise and avoid wasting scarce resources.

Following the initial presentation in plenary on lessons learned from HADR exercises in 2017, RCG members then discussed in working group these findings, with a view to determining how these could be incorporated into the planning and conduct of future HADR exercises.

**BANGLADESH:**

**Disaster Response Exercise and Exchange (DREE, 2017)**: It was felt that a greater participation by the humanitarian community and regional assisting states would have been valuable for the exercise. Overall, the size and complexity of the event with two exercise locations (Dhaka, Mymensingh), detracted from exercising the fundamentals of disaster response. More training and education is needed prior to starting the actual exercise.

**Discussion**: Overall, Bangladesh is aiming for a whole of society approach to disaster management. To achieve this objective,
Lessons Learned from HADR Exercises

Coordination mechanisms have been strengthened at district and local levels. Lessons learned from the latest DREE were applied to other national emergencies that occurred in 2017, including the Rohingya crisis, where the coordination architecture has been central to the response. While Bangladesh has a good experience in cyclone and flood response management, more focus should be placed on a possible earthquake response. The finalization of the national contingency plan, to include lessons learned from neighboring countries, is one of the Government’s priority.

**INDONESIA/MYANMAR**

**Tempest Express-30 (2017):** The Military Decision Making Process (MDMP) training only covered deliberate planning with a brief mention of crisis action planning. Pre-exercise training should be more focused to support exercise groups during the planning process.

**Discussion:** There is a need for a unique, country-level engagement. Whenever possible, national humanitarian subject matter experts should be invited. Humanitarian and government stakeholders need to be involved much earlier in the process so that the most appropriate representatives can be invited. Regional stakeholders are often overstretched, and prioritization is key when selecting which events to attend. Participation of humanitarian actors should be capitalized, with more strategic roles played by these stakeholders, in addition to delivering academic sessions. There is a need to discuss the various information sharing platforms that are used during exercises. To this end, and considering challenges highlighted throughout the RCG in information sharing between civilian and military actors, the group confirmed the need to have a dedicated Information Management Working Group within the RCG.

When planning exercises in non-natural disaster scenario, there must be an understanding from the outset that there are specific rules, laws, policies that must be acknowledged and implemented. It is not appropriate to simply ‘bolt on’ a complex scenario to existing exercises.

**PHILIPPINES**

**Balikatan (2017):** More regional participation in the exercise was needed. Pre-planning is essential to ensure that humanitarian actors’ participation is maximized. More training is needed prior to exercises on key topics such as: how the Philippines runs the Multinational Coordination Centre (MNCC); the role of the Logistics Cluster in the submission and processing of Request for Assistance (RFA) related to logistics; the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement, with a focus on the Philippines Red Cross’ role in Disaster Response.

**Discussion:** Information sharing constraints were identified; there is a need to develop a common operating picture, noting that often civilians having a limited capacity to adapt to military IT systems. There are too many coordination platforms, and these are overly complicated. The coordination architecture should be driven by national processes and should be tailored to each specific context. Getting the right people involved in the exercises and provide appropriate pre-deployment training is essential. In 2018, humanitarian civil-military coordination will be tested in the Philippines as part of the INSARAG exercise.
Panel: Prospects/Challenges for the use of technologies in HUMTECH

At present, there is significant interest in the use of new technologies to improve humanitarian action worldwide. From the use of social media platforms as important crisis communication tools to the use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles to transport much needed relief supplies to remote and otherwise difficult to access areas, these developments impact all quarters of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. These technological developments and adaptations arise as a result of and in response to particular social contexts, governance frameworks, and humanitarian needs. It is therefore important to consider these innovations in this light to assess their impact both in terms of improving the effectiveness of Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination and its impact on the humanitarian endeavor.

This panel drew on the experience of speakers situated in relief agencies, social media, and humanitarian logistics to explore the implications new technologies have on civil-military humanitarian coordination. Four tensions were discussed: (a) between the humanitarian imperative and other public goods; (b) between short- and long-term interests of those affected by disasters; (c) between the needs of disaster responders and the disaster-affected; and (d) between centralised coordination and individual autonomy. From a discussion of these tensions, the panel then assessed current prospects and challenges for the use of new technologies in Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination.

**Humanitarian//Military gateway:** To date there is no common international exchange platform to link Humanitarian (H) and Military (M) actors on operational missions and both actors often struggle to find the right information on the right platform. The H // M gateway wants to serve as the efficient starting page for humanitarian and military actors looking for information or operational interaction in their respective fields. Its main benefit lies in relevant and time-efficient source-linkage and information aggregation and comparison from various sources, including semantic full-text analysis. It was highlighted that in terms of next steps, the Humanitarian//Military gateway project would require a feasibility study and, once this is completed, allocation of adequate financial resources.

**Pacific Disaster Center (PDC):** PDC works with decision makers, disaster managers, planners, and the public to develop solutions to some of the most challenging disaster management problems. During the session an overview of PDC tools, services, and products was provided. PDC tools provide information that is easy to use — delivering useful information as hazards occur, or as disasters unfold. PDC services give disaster managers access to easily understood, visually interpreted information on hazards, in support of planning and decision making for risk reduction, while also helping to build capacity for all phases of disaster management through testing of operational systems and enhancing knowledge and skills (www.pdc.org).

**Facebook:** Facebook provided an overview of its disaster response tools, which leverage the company’s vision of building communities and bringing the world closer together. These tools allow participants to share relevant information (e.g., report on their safety) and coordinate the aid responses. Notably, Facebook’s disaster maps use trending data provided by Facebook users to give disaster responders better awareness of the situation e.g., where populations are located and where they are checking in safe. While such user-generate information is useful, it is important to have safeguards in place to prevent abuse. Facebook shared some of these features including privacy controls and measures to tackle trolls and fake news.
Panel: Prospects/Challenges for the use of technologies in HUMTECH

Mercy Relief: The organization provided an NGO’s perspective on the use of humanitarian technology. Some of the key challenges in using such technology include funding, timeline of the project, cultural acceptance, and local government policies. It was highlighted that such innovations must be accompanied by sustainable investments with a clear direction of the project. Local government’s acceptance of the technology could accelerate or delay its adoption, and thus it was important to socialize local authorities early. Mercy Relief also provided a brief overview of some of the innovations they have deployed in its work.

Deutsche Post DHL Group: DHL provided an overview of its GoHelp programme, which is a logistics initiative designed to cover all phases of disaster management by leveraging DHL’s global logistical network and its logistical expertise. The key components of GoHelp are “Get Airports Ready for Disaster” in partnership with the UN Development Programme, Disaster Response Teams that work with UN OCHA to handle relief supplies at airports, and regional projects to build shelters for local communities affected by natural disasters. DHL shared its key observations from its disaster response efforts and suggestions to improve the quality of humanitarian response, in view of more complex logistical challenges, time pressure, and local governmental conditions.

POD Structures: A company focused on innovative and adaptable shelters for disaster response with modular construction solutions that are fully furnished. During the session, an overview of POD Structures was provided. One of the key messages delivered was the importance of developing sustainable humanitarian spaces that balance the needs of the affected communities with the impact on the environment (e.g. the waste created that could create longer-term problems for the communities). For instance, temporary disaster-relief sites could become future towns for long-term housing, so it is essential to ensure ownership and accountability of these sites.
Panel: RCG Logistics Working Group (RCG-LWG)

Given the complexity and the relevance of logistics in the coordination of operational planning between civilian and military actors, an RCG Logistics Working Group (RCG-LWG) was established within the overall RCG framework, to facilitate intergovernmental and inter-agency discussions on critical logistic issues.

The RCG-LWG is linked to the Logistics Working Group established at global level, informing current thinking and discussions from a regional perspective. During the meeting, WFP provided an overview of the recommendations that RCG members formulated in relation to logistics civil-military coordination during the RCG First/Second Session as well as the two dedicated RCG-LWG meetings that took place in May and September 2017.

- **Scenario-based analysis** to look at planning processes and identify what military functions, appropriate relief tasks, and effects may be required by the military to support civilian-led response efforts. The analysis could start with the scenarios included in the ASEAN Joint Disaster Response Plans (AJDR) for the RCG priority countries (ASEAN): Indonesia, Philippines and Myanmar.

- Focus on the concept of the Humanitarian Staging Area (HSA) as a hub for predictable civil-military logistic response to rapid-onset disasters; discussion among RCG-LWG members on the modalities to move cargo from the HSA.

- Dissemination of information on existing logistics tools and services (role of Logistics Cluster, cargo tracking, logistic capacity assessment, etc.) for the RCG five priority countries: Bangladesh, Indonesia, Myanmar, Nepal and the Philippines.

- Overview of current military-to-military arrangements for the mobilization of logistic assets during HADR Operations.

As part of the panel discussion, an outline of the disaster management framework in Sri Lanka, including an overview of logistic assets and capabilities both from civilian and military actors, was provided. Furthermore, the panel focused on the Pacific region, a unique operating environment with many countries that do not have military, but only limited police assets and capabilities. The region also has very distinctive logistics challenges due to the distance and isolation of the small Pacific island and territories. Local capacity, including in logistics, can be quickly overwhelmed and the use of Foreign Military Assets (FMA) from FRANZ (France, Australia and New Zealand) to support large-scale disaster response operations would be essential. To ensure greater predictability of the support that could be provided, FRANZ countries are preparing a list of capabilities as an open-source document that could be made available to all Pacific countries. Another key area of effort in the Pacific is capacity building and training cooperation, including among logistics officers from USAR and military teams. Many RCG members highlighted that, following on the recommendations formulated during the RCG First/Second Session, there should be a dedicated RCG for the Pacific.

As part of the RCG-LWG, speed, scale and solidarity were identified as the key priorities for ASEAN. Speed was highlighted as of particular relevance for ASEAN, with two key components: 1) logistics and 2) relationships with ASEAN member states (“speed of trust”). The ASEAN Joint Disaster Response Plan (AJDRP) focuses on three countries using similar scenarios to those that are the focus of the RCG’s work (Indonesia, Myanmar and the Philippines). The AJDRP looks to anticipate what would be needed, also from a logistic point of view, during a disaster response through preparedness planning.
Global Consultative Group on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination (GC)

Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Week

The Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Week (HNPW) is the annual event of the Leading Edge Programme – a year-round collaboration platform to improve emergency preparedness and response. It is held in Geneva, Switzerland since 2015, hosted by the Swiss Government and co-chaired by OCHA and the UK’s Department for International Development (DFID). The HNPW 2018 will be held at the International Conference Centre of Geneva from 5-9 February.

As part of the HNPW, the 2018 Annual Meeting of the UN-CMCoord Global Consultative Group will comprise four 90-minute Thematic Sessions (6-7 February) and one full day Plenary Session on 8 February 2018. The events will be an opportunity to formulate collective action on humanitarian civil-military coordination in multi-state settings across natural disasters and conflicts around topics such as Frontline Medical Assistance; Sharpening UN-CMCoord on Development; Peace and Security; Periphery of UN-CMCoord; Safeguarding Humanitarian Work in Danger Zones; and Combatants in Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination. The outcomes of the RCG Third Session will be presented during the full day Plenary Session.

Humanitarian civil-military coordination standards

The development of “Standards” to direct the appropriate use of military assets in support of humanitarian assistance operations marks a significant milestone in the essential interaction between humanitarian, governmental and military actors. For over a decade the international community has swayed between a series of guidelines and guidance that, although containing highly relevant concepts and principles, do not always correlate to the sequential phases of the humanitarian response cycle.

Underpinned by regional and thematic consultations in the lead up to the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) - to include a dedicated side-event at the summit itself - a broad range of humanitarian civil-military coordination practitioners collectively identified and reaffirmed the need to better institutionalize the processes and practices shaping interaction and cooperation between humanitarian organizations and actors from affected and assisting nations. This view was shared and endorsed at the annual meeting of the multi-stakeholder Consultative Group on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination in February 2016. It is with this group that the Standards project is anchored.

The resulting set of Standards provides a unified framework to guide principled and coordinated humanitarian civil-military interaction before, during and after a humanitarian assistance operation. Their application will enhance the predictability, effectiveness, efficiency and coherence of employing military assets in humanitarian emergencies, and will serve to reinforce the need for a clear distinction between the roles and responsibilities of humanitarian, government and military actors.

For further information: www.dialoguing.org
RCG 2018 Vision

At the end of the RCG Third Session, an official ceremony took place to mark the hand-over of the RCG Chair from the Government of Singapore (2017) to the Government of Bangladesh (2018).

"The chairmanship of the RCG next year means a lot for Bangladesh. We believe it is in line with the achievements and progress made in our country over the years in terms of preparedness for and response to disasters and complex emergencies."

Honorable Secretary Mr. Md. Shah Kamal, Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR)

As part of the RCG Third Session, members were consulted in relation to the key themes that should be addressed by the RCG in 2018. At the end of the RCG Third Session, Bangladesh as the RCG chair for 2018, presented in plenary a summary of the themes proposed by the RCG membership:

**Continuity with RCG themes:**
- Continue with updates from the five priority countries and policy development/evolution from previous years; comparison of the five countries lessons learned and suggestions for others in their own development;
- Focus on country-specific CMCoord guidelines;
- RCG Logistics Working Group;
- How Lessons Learned from 2017-2018 Exercises apply to current Regional HADR;
- Synchronization of HADR events in the Asia-Pacific;
- Raising awareness about existing and emerging Regional Platforms;
- Inter-Regional organisations cooperation (ASEAN/SAARC).

**RCG new proposed themes:**
- Establish an RCG Information Management Working Group;
- UN-CMCoord in refugee situations;
- UN-CMCoord: protection in preparedness aspects;
- The Use of Foreign Military and Civil Defence Assets (MCDA) in Complex Emergencies;
- HADR operations during a CBRN Event;
- A focused session on Civil-Military coordination regarding USAR (INSARAG) and/or the new EMT system (health response) discussing best-practice and how to suit this to different contexts in the region;
- Dedicated discussion on the Pacific and how the RCG can support the region;
- Additional focus on the civil side of Civil-Military Coordination with some NGO-led discussions and enhanced NGO participation;
- Military-Police interaction.

**Training and Exercises:**
- Incorporating spontaneous civilian volunteer groups in HADR operations i.e. in urban search and rescue;
- Discussion on a culminating (5th Year anniversary) exercise for multi-stakeholder RCG participants;
- Develop a regional exercise preparedness forward calendar and a portal for exercise design products and lessons learned;
- Development of a working group or general understanding of how humanitarian actors/private sector/others can be involved in military HADR exercises.

Over the next few months, the Government of Bangladesh will review the proposed 2018 RCG Themes and will select key topics that they would like to support next year as part of their RCG chairmanship.
## EVENT CALENDAR 2018

### January
- 1 January/3 February
  - ADMM-Plus EWG on HADR (Honolulu, Hawaii)

### February
- 11-24 February
  - COBRA GOLD (Thailand)
  - First Meeting of the RCG Logistic Working Group RCG-LWG
  - 8 February - Annual Meeting of the Global Consultative Group (Geneva, Switzerland)

### March
- 11-16 March
  - UN-CMCoord Course for Asia (Location TBD)
  - DHL Disaster Response Training (Yogyakarta)
  - ARDEX IPC (Indonesia)
  - 11-14 March
    - TE 33 Initial Planning Conference (Dhaka, Bangladesh)

### April
- ASEAN CMCoord 2018 (Thailand)
  - Balikatan (Philippines)
  - MNF SOP Workshop (Location TBD)
  - Key Resolve 18+Sr. Leaders’ Seminar (ROK)

### May
- EAS Disaster Workshop (EMA) - (Perth, Australia)
  - ARDEX MSEL Workshop (Indonesia)
  - 29 April/11 May
    - UNDAC Induction Course (Morges, Switzerland)
  - 07-10 May
    - TE 33 Final Planning Conference (Dhaka, Bangladesh)

### June
- INSARAG Regional Earthquake Exercise (Philippines)
  - Second Meeting of the RCG Logistic Working Group RCG-LWG
  - RCG Mid-Term Consultation (TBC) (Bangladesh)
  - RIMPAC
    - 27 Jun - 02 August

### July
- ADMM-Plus EWG on HADR TTX- (Malaysia)
  - ROK-US Stability Drill
  - ARDEX FPC and Referee Training (Indonesia)

### August
- Tempest Express 33 (Bangladesh)
  - Ulchi Freedom Guardian 18+Sr. Leaders’ Seminar (ROK)
  - INSARAG Asia-Pacific meeting (Tokyo)

### September
- DREE 2018 (Nepal)

### October
- 21-25 October UN-CMCoord Course for the Pacific (Location TBD)

### November
- ARDEX2018 (Chilegon, Indonesia)

### December
- RCG Fourth Session (TBC in Q4) (Dhaka, Bangladesh)