

# COVID 19, LOCALLY-LED HUMANITARIAN ACTION AND TRANSFORMATION OF HUMANITARIAN ARCHITECTURE

*What we have learned from six Regional Lessons Learned  
Webinars and a Symposium held in October 2021*

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Lead Adviser – Regional Engagement

Lessons learning on Covid-19 and Its Impact on  
Disaster Management and Resilience  
25 February 2022

# SIAP SIAGA Program is a 5-year partnership between Governments of Australia and Indonesia from November 2019 to November 2024

## OBJECTIVES

The Program aims to:

- 1 Improve Indonesia's ability to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from rapid and slow onset disasters in Indonesia
- 2 **Strengthen cooperation between Australia and Indonesia on disaster risk management and humanitarian issues in the region**

To achieve these objectives, the Program will be implemented under four (4) outcomes..

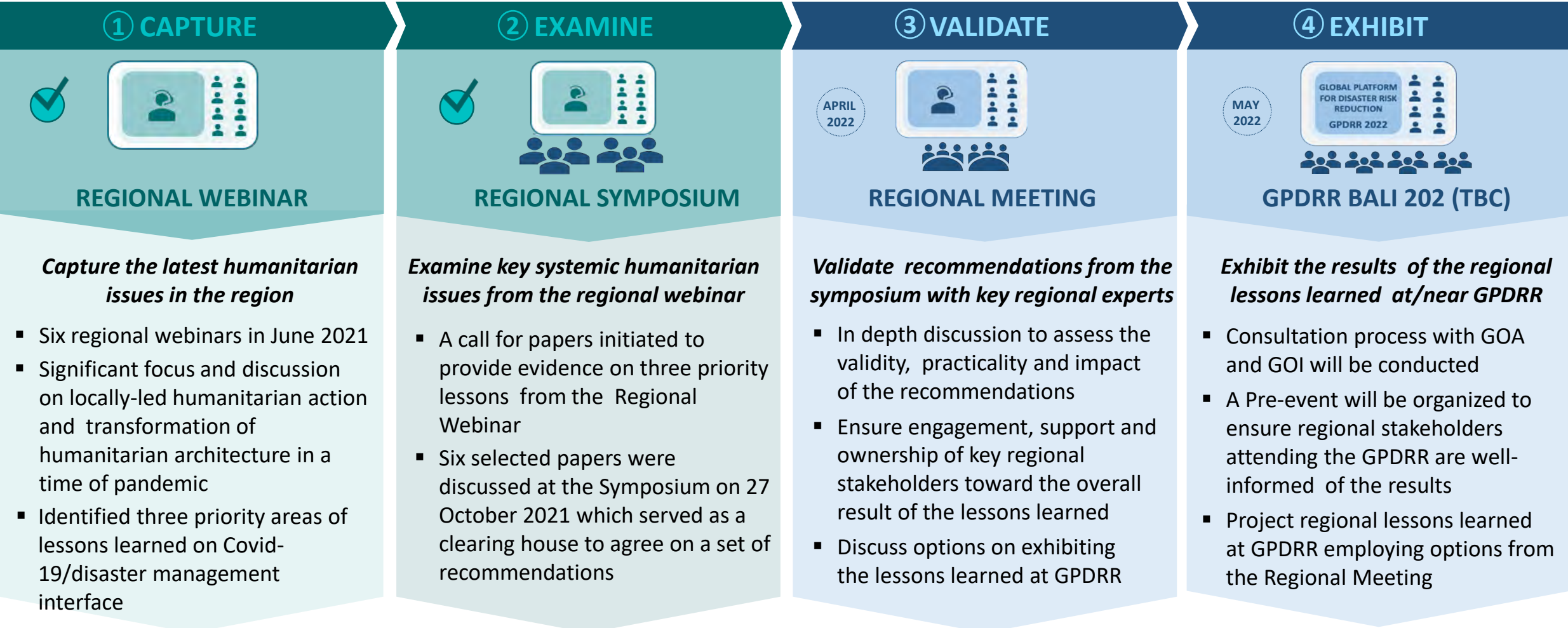
- a Strengthening BNPB's organisational system resulting in better leadership of Disaster Risk Management (DRM)
- b Strengthening sub-national DRM capacity and community resilience
- c **Strengthening cooperation between Australia and Indonesia on regional disaster risk management and humanitarian issues**
- d **Strengthening learning, innovation and inclusion for DRM**

*Article 7.5 Subsidiary Agreement*

The Program is focused on achieving development outcomes that improve Indonesia's DRM capacity, by **working across the DRM ecosystem**. It will also **support knowledge sharing and exchange** at the operational level between Australia and Indonesia **on disaster risk management and humanitarian issues**.

*Article 7.6 Subsidiary Agreement*

To support knowledge sharing and exchange in the region, SIAP SIAGA aims to organize a series of lessons learned events starting from capturing the latest humanitarian issues in the region to exhibiting the overall results at GPDRR 2022



- OBJECTIVES
- 1

Contribute to enhancing national, regional and global knowledge on disaster management
- 2

Promote best practices and lessons learned in disaster management during the COVID19 pandemic
- 3

Influence international and regional organizations in adapting policies and procedures for a post-pandemic world

The regional webinar series aimed to discuss and seek inputs on six areas of enquiry to capture the latest humanitarian issues in the region

1

What have been **the implications of the pandemic** for business as usual in responding to disasters?

2

Has the pandemic fostered and supported **a changing role for local organizations** in delivering humanitarian assistance as a result of pandemics? If so, is this simply a blip in the business-as-usual model or a sign of a more significant change?

3

How have local communities and people adapted to the conditions wrought by the pandemic and ultimately enhanced **local level resilience to disasters** and crises through lessons learned from this event?

4

What has been **the impact of changing uses of technology** in coordinating assistance in a Covid-19 environment?

5

How has the pandemic changed **the roles of the regional and international humanitarian systems**? Is this change sustainable?

6

What has been **the role of the media (including social media)** in supporting efforts to manage the pandemic; has the media helped to enhance local level resilience to crises and disasters through its actions during this pandemic?



From 14 -25 June 2021, SIAP SIAGA conducted six series of regional lessons learned webinar on “Covid-19 and Its Impact on Disaster Management and Resilience” with 23 speakers and moderators from the region and more than 300 participants

### WEBINAR 1

COVID-19 AND THE LONG AWAITED DISRUPTION IN DISASTER RESPONSE ARCHITECTURE: CAN CHANGE REALLY HAPPEN?

#### MODERATOR



**Dr. Jemilah Mahmood,**  
Senior Adviser to the Prime Minister of Malaysia on Public Health

#### SPEAKERS

**Dr. Rahmawati Hussein,**

Vice-Chair Muhammadiyah Disaster Management Centre, Indonesia and Member of the UN-CERF Advisory Group



**Mr. Rene S. Meily,**

President, Philippine Disaster Foundation, Inc.



**Mr. Josefa Lalabalavu,**

Pacific Disaster Risk Management (DRM) Coordinator, Plan International



### WEBINAR 2

COVID-19 AND THE CHANGED ROLE OF LOCAL ORGANISATIONS IN AID DELIVERY: WILL IT LAST?

#### MODERATOR



**Mr. Said Faisal,**  
Senior Adviser, SIAP SIAGA Program

#### SPEAKERS

**Dr Faizal Perdaus,**

President, Mercy Malaysia



**Ms. Victoria Saez-Omenaca,**

Head, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Indonesia



**Ms. Lan Mercado,**

Director for Strategy and Feminist Futures and Asia Regional Director, OXFAM



### WEBINAR 3

LOCAL LEVEL ADAPTATION TO THE PANDEMIC AND ENHANCEMENT OF LOCAL LEVEL RESILIENCE TO DISASTERS AND CRISES

#### MODERATOR



**Mr. Raditya Jati,**  
Deputy for System and Strategy, National Disaster Management Agency, Indonesia

#### SPEAKERS

**Prof. Daniel Daud Kameo,**

Executive Adviser to the Governor of East Nusa Tenggara



**Ms Pannapa Na Nan,**

Director, International Cooperation Section, Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation, Thailand



**Dr. Bernadia Irawati Tjandradewi,**

Secretary-General, United Cities and Local Governments, Asia Pacific.



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### WEBINAR 4

#### CHANGING USES OF TECHNOLOGY IN COORDINATING ASSISTANCE IN A COVID-19 ENVIRONMENT



##### MODERATOR

**Mr. Petrarca Karetji,**  
Head of Pulse Lab Jakarta

##### SPEAKERS

##### Dr. Jane Thomason,

Founder, Supernova Data, and Blockchain and Disruptive Technology Expert, Australia



##### Mr. Andrew Schroeder,

Vice President of Research and Analysis, Direct Relief, USA

##### Mr. Noudhy Valdryno,

Politics and Government Outreach Manager Facebook Asia-Pacific



### WEBINAR 5

#### THE PANDEMIC'S IMPACT ON THE ROLE OF THE REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT SYSTEM(S)



##### MODERATOR

**Mr. Oliver Lacey-Hall,**  
Lead Adviser, SIAP SIAGA Indonesia

##### SPEAKERS

##### Ms. Adelina Kamal,

Executive Director, ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance (AHA Centre)



##### Mr. Markus Werne,

Head, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

##### Ms. Jo-Hannah Lavey,

Executive, Humanitarian Advisory Group, Australia



### WEBINAR 6

#### THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA IN SUPPORTING EFFORTS TO MANAGE DISASTERS DURING THE PANDEMIC



##### MODERATOR

**Mr. Said Faisal,**  
Senior Adviser, SIAP SIAGA Program

##### SPEAKERS

##### Ms. Anne Barker,

Indonesia Correspondent, Australian Broadcasting Company



##### Mr. Agung Yudhawirana,

Director for Indonesia and Malaysia, Twitter

##### Dr. Raditya Jati,

Deputy for System and Strategy, National Disaster Management Agency, Indonesia





From the six series of Webinars we learned that while the pandemic has caused untold devastation across the region, **SPACE AND OPPORTUNITIES HAVE BEEN ACCELERATED** for rapid transformation of disaster management and humanitarian action **TO STRENGTHEN LOCAL LEADERSHIP.**

*However, **three key areas**, often institutional and largely pre-existing factors, **have either slowed or derailed this process***

1

**GOVERNANCE AND  
INSTITUTIONAL LEADERSHIP**

2

**PARTNERSHIP MODELS**

3

**DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY  
AND COMMUNICATION**

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- ① **The commitments** to transform current systems **have been made** for a number of years,
- ② **HOWEVER, there is insufficient systemic change** in how international, regional, and national disaster management and humanitarian organizations are structured and work together to allow local actors to **lead** and implement effective disaster response,
- ③ **AND, limited willingness to invest** in local capacity for disaster resilience at all levels, has prevented transformation from taking place at the rate required to ensure that local actors are prepared to respond to the emergence of the current pandemic and future disaster-related risks and threats.

*High in commitments but low in implementation and investment*

## WHY DOES THIS AREA REMAIN PROBLEMATIC?

- ① **Lack of Incentive to Change, and Vested-Interest to Maintain Status-Quo**  
*Localization requires a shift in the balance of power, influence, and money immediately away from international and regional actors to the national and local levels.*
- ② **Dependency on Traditional Financing**  
*The current ecosystem of humanitarian financing is still largely dependent on the major traditional donors along with their internationally established and preferred systems, power relations, levels of risk tolerance and mechanisms.*
- ③ **Rigidity and Strictness of System's Requirements**  
*Risk tolerance on behalf of funding bodies has decreased the appetite to push any significant increases in funding to local actors and also prevented initiative of local actors to directly access the funding due to difficulties in complying with the requirements*
- ④ **Capacity Gap**  
*Capacity is a critical foundation for localization, and the capacity to lead, take charge of, and deliver disaster management services at the local level will depend on the willingness and ability of all actors to provide a sufficient long term investment in building the capacity*
- ⑤ **Insufficiently Robust Regulatory Frameworks**  
*Speed, space, and preference towards localization, including allocation of resources, are influenced by strategies, policies, and regulations issued by both providing and recipient governments.*



## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- ① While **there was recognition of the key role that local actors played** and continue to play in supporting people affected by disasters during the pandemic .
- ② **HOWEVER, the pandemic has done little to shift the paradigm** from the contractor and subcontractor relationship toward a partnership model in favour of greater participation, equality and leadership for local actors
- ③ **AND the need to align interests and expand the scope, definition,** ambition to recast partnership model for disaster management

*More contractor and subcontractor relationship and less equal partnership*

## WHY DOES THIS AREA REMAIN PROBLEMATIC?

- ① **Limited Scope and Ambition of Partnership**  
Current partnership models are largely contractor and subcontractor relationship with a strong focus on aid delivery and limits the involvement of local actors in setting the agenda, strategy, and policy concerning disaster management and humanitarian action
- ② **Inappropriate Success Criteria**  
Operational-based partnerships tend to place more value on the effectiveness and efficiency of aid delivery, such as project completion and administrative achievement, and less on capacity development, empowerment and mentoring to enable local actors to lead
- ③ **Limited Time Horizons**  
Short-term and one-off partnerships limit the transfer of knowledge and technology, opportunities to build trust and confidence, influence mindsets, and establish an effective and sustainable partnerships
- ④ **Inability to Align Interests**  
Different agencies involved in disaster management and humanitarian action have different interests depending on their agendas, values, mission, and goals, which complicate the ability to agree on a unified approach on how to best assist people in need.
- ⑤ **Interoperability Gap**  
Differences in standards operating procedures, technological advancement, organizational culture and operating language trigger interoperability gap that affects each party's ability to complement each other and form a collective strength in providing assistance

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- ① There is sufficient evidence to argue that the use of **digital technology has gathered pace exponentially** during the time of the pandemic.
- ② **HOWEVER**, this **digital capital remains largely untapped** and digitalization in disaster management and humanitarian sector has not progressed optimally to achieve quantum and systemic transformation of the sector
- ③ **AND** the focus of **attention and support is still largely on disaster emergencies** and less on mitigation, prevention and preparedness

*An exponential growth in digital technology but a linear growth in digital transformation*

## WHY DOES THIS AREA REMAIN PROBLEMATIC?

- ① **Selective Digitization**  
Digitization in the humanitarian sector are largely limited to digitizing the business processes, while the real impact in digitization will only occur when there are commitments and actions to digitize the humanitarian system architecture
- ② **Exclusive Governance Arrangements**  
Existing international disaster management and humanitarian governance arrangements have not made space for prominent technology actors in the global governance setting, where they could be more involved in decision making and in creating solutions
- ③ **Data Management Challenge**  
The pace of harnessing technology to solve humanitarian challenges will depend on the interaction with the advancement of digital technology which requires more capacity in humanitarian data management and better regulation on data security, protection, privacy, and surveillance
- ④ **Literacy Gap**  
The popular shift in treating social media from a source of information with diverse perspectives to a key source of news without verification and validation, has increased the incidence of “fake news”, which complicates emergency response communications during disasters
- ⑤ **Imbalance in Risk Communication**  
High levels of coverage through traditional and social media during significant disaster emergencies triggers tremendous attention and support but the level of attention and coverage are less for risk communication for mitigation, prevention, and preparedness.

## Six academic papers were commissioned in preparation for the Regional Symposium

Presenting	Thematic Area	Name	Title and Organisation
Laws, Disasters and Public Health Emergencies in Asia Pacific: Lessons from Covid-19	Governance and Institutional Leadership	Ms. Gabrielle Emery	Asia Pacific Disaster Law Manager, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Creating a Level Playing Field: Lessons from Covid-19 on improving localisation	Governance and Institutional Leadership	Ms. Adelina Kamal	Independent Consultant
Contributing factors to Strengthening Local Partnerships: Lessons from Bethesda Yakkum Care Centre, Jogjakarta	Partnership Models	Ms. Shinta Arshinta	Director, YAKKUM Community Development and Humanitarian Units
Increasing Adaptation Capacity of Children, Adolescents and Youth (CAY) in the Context of Covid-19 and Changing Climate through Partnered and Participatory Engagement Approach, and Feminist Principles	Partnership Models	Mr. Nghia Trong Trinh	Regional Resilience and Safe Schools Specialist, Plan International
Importance of Integrating Native Language into the Digitisation of Disaster and Pandemic Communication for People with Disabilities in Indonesia: Lessons from the Covid-19 Pandemic	Technology and Communications	Prof. Dra. Fatma Lestari	Director, Disaster Risk Reduction, University of Indonesia
Supporting the development of information systems – A Pandemic-related Case Study in Indonesia.	Technology and Communications	Mr. Faizal Thamrin	Humanitarian Data Adviser, Pulse Lab Jakarta.

Webinar proceedings, papers and presentations for the Symposium can all be found at:  
<https://www.siapsiaga.or.id/en/knowledge-category/lessons-learned-2/>



# The Regional Symposium was convened at the end of October 2021

## OBJECTIVE

*Examined three key systemic issues related to disaster management and humanitarian action resulted from six series of the regional lessons learned webinars*

### 1 GOVERNANCE AND INSTITUTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Lack of incentive to change, and vested-interest to maintain status-quo • Dependency on traditional financing • Rigidity and strictness of system's requirements • Capacity gap • Insufficiently robust regulatory frameworks

### 2 PARTNERSHIP MODELS

Limited scope and ambition of partnership • Inappropriate success criteria • Limited time horizons • Inability to align interests • Interoperability gap

### 3 DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNICATION

Selective digitization • Exclusive governance arrangements • Data management challenge • Literacy gap • Imbalance in risk communication

## OUTCOMES

*The Symposium delivered...*

- 1 **New evidence** through presentation of a series of papers on issues related to Governance and Institutional Leadership, Partnership Models, and Digital technology and Communication.
- 2 **Exchange of perspectives** among diverse participants from the region through series of facilitated discussions
- 3 **A set of recommendations** in solving three key systemic issues related to disaster management and humanitarian action with focus on local leadership and transformation of humanitarian architecture



**Regional Symposium**  
Lessons Learning on Covid-19 and Its Impact on Disaster Management and Resilience  
27 October 2021  
10 AM – 5 PM (Jakarta/Bangkok time)

SIAP SIAGA hosted six webinars in June 2021 to examine the impact that the pandemic has had on disaster management in the Asia Pacific Region.

The webinars identified three key themes for further enquiry:

- Governance and Institutional Leadership
- Partnership Models
- Technology and Communications

Six papers have been commissioned to provide evidence that will support the formulation of the lessons learned document that will be shared at the 2022 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction. Please join us as we discuss these papers, and draw lessons from them:

To join, please register here: [s.id/regional Symposium](https://s.id/regional Symposium)

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## SOME (but not all!) EMERGING FINDINGS

*Building on the three themes – Governance, Partnerships and Digital Technology*

- 1 Expedite localization of disaster risk management.** The pandemic limited international, regional and, in some instances, national assistance for local communities when they were facing the combined adverse impacts of the pandemic and another disaster. Experience from a number of communities showed they struggled to deal with disasters in the absence of external assistance. Yet in those struggles, communities have also found new way to tap into their own potentials cope with disasters.
- 2 Enhance community resilience** by providing communities with enablers that maximise their own social and cultural capital. Pandemic recovery must be managed in a way that embraces the lessons which communities have learned so we do not rebuild risk and dependency upon external assistance.
- 3 Get more savvy with digitech.** Familiarity with digital tech has enabled local communities to access global knowledge and expertise – a big win. However, the uptake in use of these technologies is not sufficient if they are not adapted to/ aware of the local contexts and cultures. Where possible digitech tools should adapt to practices that are ingrained in local culture and customs.

## POSSIBLE NEXT STEPS

- 1 Lessons learned Synthesis Report** – bringing together the key points from the process and proposing recommendations.
- 2 Side or preparatory events** at GPDRR (May 2022) and APMCDRR (Sept 2022)
- 3 Presentation of report** in regional fora such as ACDM, EAS and PIF.
- 4 Incorporation of findings** into other studies on the impact of C-19 on disaster risk management and humanitarian action.

# REIMAGINING THE HUMANITARIAN ARCHITECTURE – SIX SUGGESTIONS

1

Speed up building local and regional capacity to manage humanitarian crises

But not only to manage partnerships with the provider of the capacity building support.

2

Fostering resilience needs to be at the root of our collective engagement.

But that requires a “real” change in the relationship between providers and recipients of assistance.

3

Rethink partnerships. Current arrangements disempower local organisations and discourage decentralisation of power.

Covid-19 has reinforced current partnership paradigms.

4

Reconsider what constitutes “humanitarian life-saving assistance”.

For example: a SIM card, a phone charger and a solar panel

5

Stop using digitech simply to manage business processes and publicise work. Use it to engage with people

Adapt digitech to local conditions and cultures.

6

Implement what has already been agreed. Commitments abound but implementation deficiencies and rhetoric fill those outside the system with scepticism that it can deliver.

“Agenda for Humanity”  
“Grand Bargain 2.0”



“COVID-19 has demonstrated that 'resource' and 'capacity' are far more extensive than our traditional thinking on disaster management and resilience previously understood”

# THANK YOU

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Lead Adviser – Regional Engagement

**SIAP SIAGA**

Australia-Indonesia Partnership  
for Disaster Risk Management

# Local Knowledge as Local Capacity for Disasters Responses

Miwa Hirono

Ritsumeikan University (Kyoto/Osaka, Japan)

25 February 2022

For 2022 APRU Multi-Hazards Webinar Series

“Reimagining humanitarian architecture for the future in a complex era”



**LOCAL KNOWLEDGE  
AS  
LOCAL CAPACITY**

Academic Research on local knowledge as local capacity -- Why do we need it?

## Critiques of the policy discourse:

### No academic evidence

1. Intuitive assumption that localization *should* work.
2. Assumptions based on fragmented in-field experience.
3. Varied interpretations of what “localization” actually means.
4. Less attention paid to culture, history and tradition in Asia or non-institutional local actors

# Academic Research on local knowledge as local capacity -- Why do we need it?

- **For locally-led approaches to disaster responses, local knowledge is local capacity.**
- **Rich tradition and history** in Asia as the backbone of disaster responses
- **THESE ARE THE INDISPENSABLE CAPACITY!**
- How to we recognize local knowledge
  - This research offers an **analytical framework**.



# “local knowledge as local capacity”

## What is local knowledge?

- Not static “indigenous” “traditional” “ancient” “exotic” knowledge
- evolving processes of tradition and modernity.
- Dynamic concept.

Local knowledge “consists of factual **knowledge**, **skills**, and **capabilities**, most of which have some empirical grounding. It is **culturally** situated and is best understood as a ‘**social** product’ ”  
(Antweiler, 1998, p. 469).

Christoph Antweiler, “Local Knowledge and Local Knowing: An Anthropological Analysis of Contested ‘Cultural Products’ in the Context of Development,” *Anthropos* 93 (1998): 469-494.

# Analytical Framework:

## The Manifestations of Local Knowledge

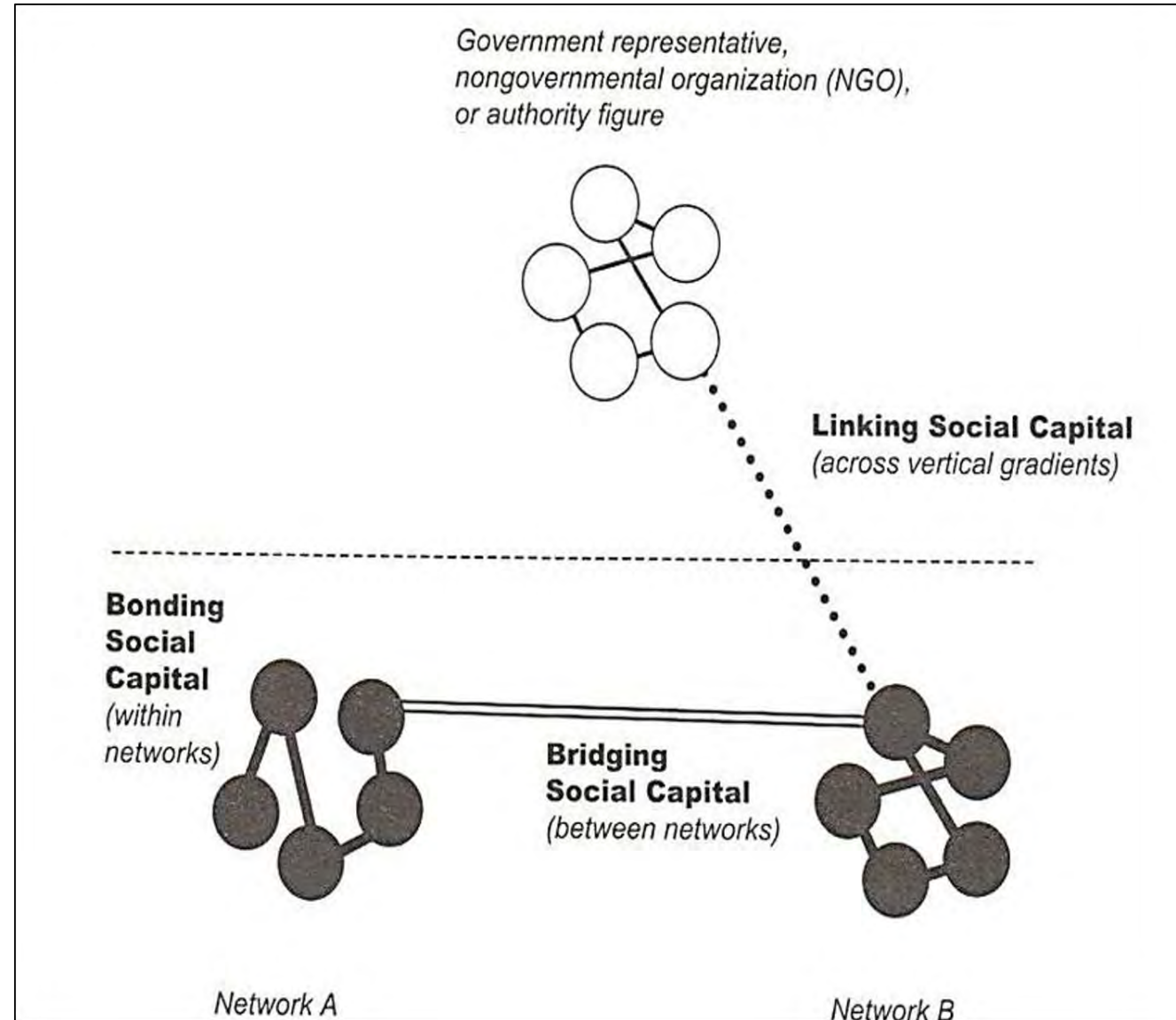
-- What does local knowledge look like in reality? --

- 1. Social capital (including trust, norms, networks)**
- 2. Contextual historical memories**
- 3. Methods of adaptation through dialogue – assimilation, conflict, and new consciousness**
- 4. Evolving customs, practices and beliefs**

# Social Capital

- “Social networks have values” (Putnam)
- Trust, norms, networks
- Speed up recovery and enhance resilience

- 1) Bonding
- 2) Bridging
- 3) Linking social capital
- 4) Leading to participation



Source: Aldrich 2012.

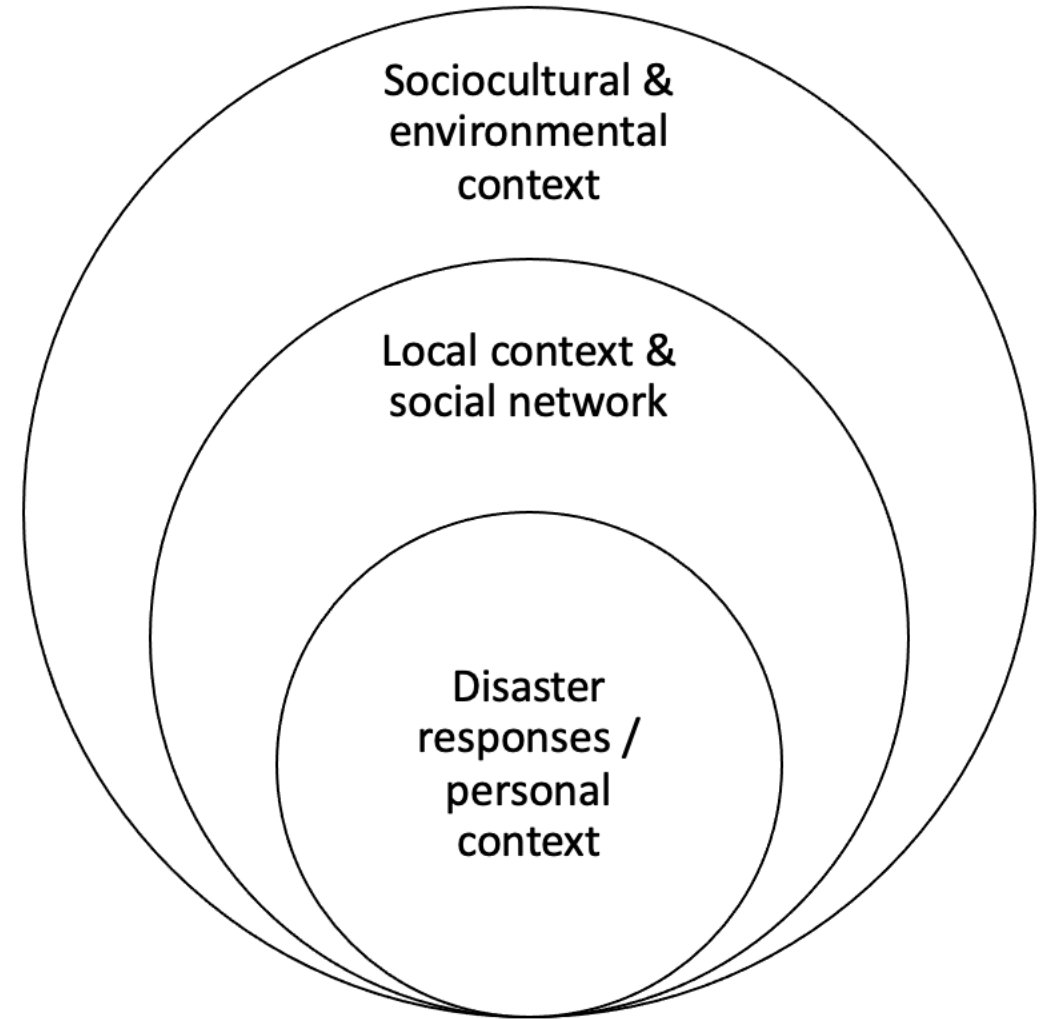
# Does your local community/organization...

- Form trust with local/affected people?
- Facilitate bonding within local/affected people?
- Play a bridging and linking role between outsiders and community?
- Have local/affected people participate in decision-making and implementation of DMHA projects/assistance?



# Contextual historical memories

- Disaster response as part of social activity
- Sociocultural and environmental contexts matter
- Local contexts and social network matter (Historical memories)
- Other contexts - “Context-specific approach”
- Especially important when outsiders making new connection with affected community.



# Does your local community/organization...

- Understand **sociocultural and environmental contexts**
- Understand **local contexts and social network** amongst residents (e.g., ethnic divide; social hierarchy; prejudice)
- Understand **other local contexts** that matter to disaster responses

# Methods of adaptation through dialogue – assimilation, conflict, and new consciousness

- Ways of interactions
  - 1) Assimilation
  - 2) Conflict
  - 3) New Consciousness
    - ability to develop something new as a result of interaction with outsiders
    - Process of sharpening consciousness as a group



Source: Miwa Hirono, *Civilizing Missions: International Religious Agencies in China* (Palgrave, 2008).

# Does your local community/organization...

- Interact with different local communities
- Work with external stakeholders (e.g., donors, international organizations, government and other NGOs)
- Know how the local community tends to
  - Assimilate to outside values, beliefs and knowledge,
  - Resist against them, and/or
  - create something new (e.g., new identity, new practice)
- Identify the pattern of engagement and incorporate it in the planning of disaster responses



# Evolving customs, practices and beliefs

- Disaster as routine
- Customs, practices and religious beliefs matter
- Hierarchy
- Going beyond hierarchy (women, minorities, vulnerable groups)

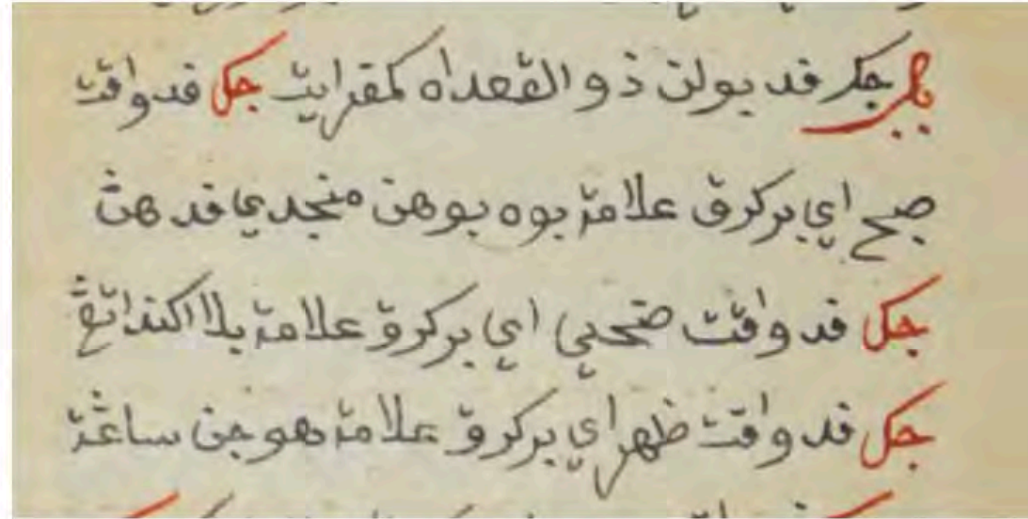


Figure 2: Example of manuscript on earthquake, source: EAP329/1/49 page 25

*Transcription: "If an earthquake in the month of Dzulkaidah. If it moves Dawn time, sign of fruits become it is [good]. If it moves Dhuha time, sign of calamity will come. If it moves Dhuhur time, sign of very [strong] rain. If it moves Ashar time, sign of goodness"*



# Does your local community/organization...

- Understand local customs, practices and beliefs (context and social impacts)?
- Consider how customs, practices and beliefs save lives and mitigate disasters?
- Incorporate them as part of disaster response plans?
- Think about how the needs of the vulnerable groups are addressed, while respecting customs, practices and beliefs