Revisiting Multilateral Cooperation on NTS Issues in ASEAN: The Case of AHA Centre
Is multilateral cooperation needed?

In what situation multilateral cooperation is needed or considered relevant?
Multilateral cooperation is not only needed, but inevitable, when there are common problems that have to be addressed or resolved.
Despite differences in both indexes, Philippines, Indonesia, Myanmar, Viet Nam, and Thailand scored as the top five Member States with ASEAN's highest natural hazard risk score (Figure 1.3). Both indexes identified that hydro-meteorological hazards were the main drivers of risks across the region. Geophysical hazards form a significant amount of risks, however the Philippines and Indonesia scored higher for volcanic and earthquake risk. Based on data recorded between July 2012 and January 2019, a total of 1,604 disasters of varying scales were experienced within the ASEAN region (Figure 1.4 and 1.5). Hydrological and meteorological disasters account for 85.17%, which includes floods, strong winds, tropical storms, and droughts (Figure 1.4). Geophysical disasters on the other hand, account for the remaining 14.83%, with landslides most common followed by earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and an almost insignificant number of tsunami occurrences. Comparing historical records with the natural hazard risk score, it can be noted that monitoring efforts for Myanmar, Cambodia, and Lao PDR should be strengthened. (July 2012 - January 2019)

Majority of disasters in the ASEAN region are hydro-meteorological in nature, such as floods, winds, storm and landslides – hazards that can be mitigated and prepared for.
In 2018, the combined nominal GDP of ASEAN countries ranked fifth globally, amounting to **USD 2.89 trillion**. However, due to the constant risk of natural hazards, the region’s exposed capital stocks amount to **USD 8.35 trillion**, or three times its combined economy.
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(ADINet, 2019)

**Figure 1.4**

Breakdown of Disasters in ASEAN (by type) shows that the overwhelming majority of occurrences are hydro-meteorological in nature - hazards that can be mitigated and prepared for (ADINet, 2019).

**Figure 1.5**

Breakdown Distribution of Disasters in ASEAN (by country) show that majority, or 63% of all disasters, occurred in Indonesia. The Philippines follows with a 10% share, while the remaining 27% is divided among the rest of the region. (ADINet, 2019).
Multi-hazard Risk Results show that Singapore, Brunei Darussalam and Malaysia have higher coping capacities yet lower multi-hazard risk, exposure and vulnerability.

This “surplus” of resilience show opportunities to complement and improve other ASEAN Member States who generally rank lower.

Further study is required to measure the coping capacity of the ASEAN region as a whole, in order to further understand the resiliency of ASEAN nations to support each other within the context of One ASEAN One Response.
Multilateral cooperation is considered useful when the benefits are concrete
Some benefits of multilateral cooperation:

- knowledge exchange
- resource sharing
- joint action

The benefits should be greater than if we only do it individually or bilaterally
The AHA Centre has responded to a total of 25 incidents in 7 countries across the region, and conducted preparedness and assessment missions in another 5 occasions.
RESOURCE SHARING THAT ENABLES FOR JOINT ACTION:
The AHA Centre is managing a regional stockpile of relief items located in Subang, Malaysia, and two other satellite warehouses in the Philippines and Thailand.
RESOURCE SHARING THAT ENABLES FOR JOINT ACTION:
The AHA Centre is managing a pool of ASEAN Emergency Response and Assessment Team (ERAT) to help in rapid assessments and provide coordination support on the ground.
Is there such a thing as the so-called the wave of nationalism and “me-first” outlook within the context of HADR?

Is it wrong to have this nationalistic approach?
When it comes to HADR, bilateral offers of assistance will still prevail, but multilateral approach can also be done.

In the case of ASEAN, we now have options, do it bilaterally, do it through regional mechanism or both.

The more options for countries/partners to give, the more channel of aids, the better.
The Rapid Inter-Organisational Network Mapping of emergency response following Central Sulawesi Earthquake & Tsunami (2018) shows the AHA Centre played a more accomplished role as a regional coordinating agency and exercised various aspects of One ASEAN One Response.