

Thesis Abstract

No. 1

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Title of Thesis: Effects of the Classification System in International Search and Rescue			
Summary of Thesis: The network of international search and rescue (SAR) teams, International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG), has used its unique classification system, called INSARAG External Classification (IEC), since 2005. More than ten years have passed since the introduction of IEC, but saving lives by international teams is still difficult, as shown in the 2015 Nepal earthquake. This study analyses if IEC contributes to saving more lives by successfully addressing the identified hindrances of international SAR: timing, capacity, and coordination. Thus, the study reviews the IEC system development based on the INSARAG meeting summaries and interviews with the key persons who contributed to the establishment of the system. It also conducts case studies on capacity building of SAR teams through the IEC process in Japan (Japan Disaster Relief team) and Indonesia (BASARNAS), and the field response in the Nepal earthquake. The study demonstrated that IEC has contributed to capacity building of international SAR teams in Japan and Indonesia, and interestingly, it also showed the positive effects on capacity building of local SAR teams. However, the strengthened capacity of international SAR teams was not fully utilised in the actual deployments. For example, the IEC-classified teams were not prioritised by the affected governments, and some IEC-classified teams did not satisfy their responsibility as the classified teams. Also, in the standards-setting process, the view of receiving countries was not fully incorporated. INSARAG has focused on the activities in assisting countries, but more awareness of INSARAG and IEC, and capacity building of national and local teams in disaster-prone countries are needed so that the IEC system fully works and save more lives. Based on the discussion, the study developed a model for decision-making in receiving SAR assistance, which incorporates the diplomatic aspect, and a checklist for receiving international SAR teams. It also discussed how international SAR teams could contribute to non-earthquake disasters and early recovery. Keyword: <i>Search and Rescue, International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG), International Emergency Management, Lessons Learned, Capacity Building</i>			