

STIMSON

INTERNATIONAL DISASTER RESPONSE

# Rebuilding the Quad?

EDITED BY YUKI TATSUMI & JASON LI



Part of the *Views from the Next Generation Series*



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MARCH 2019

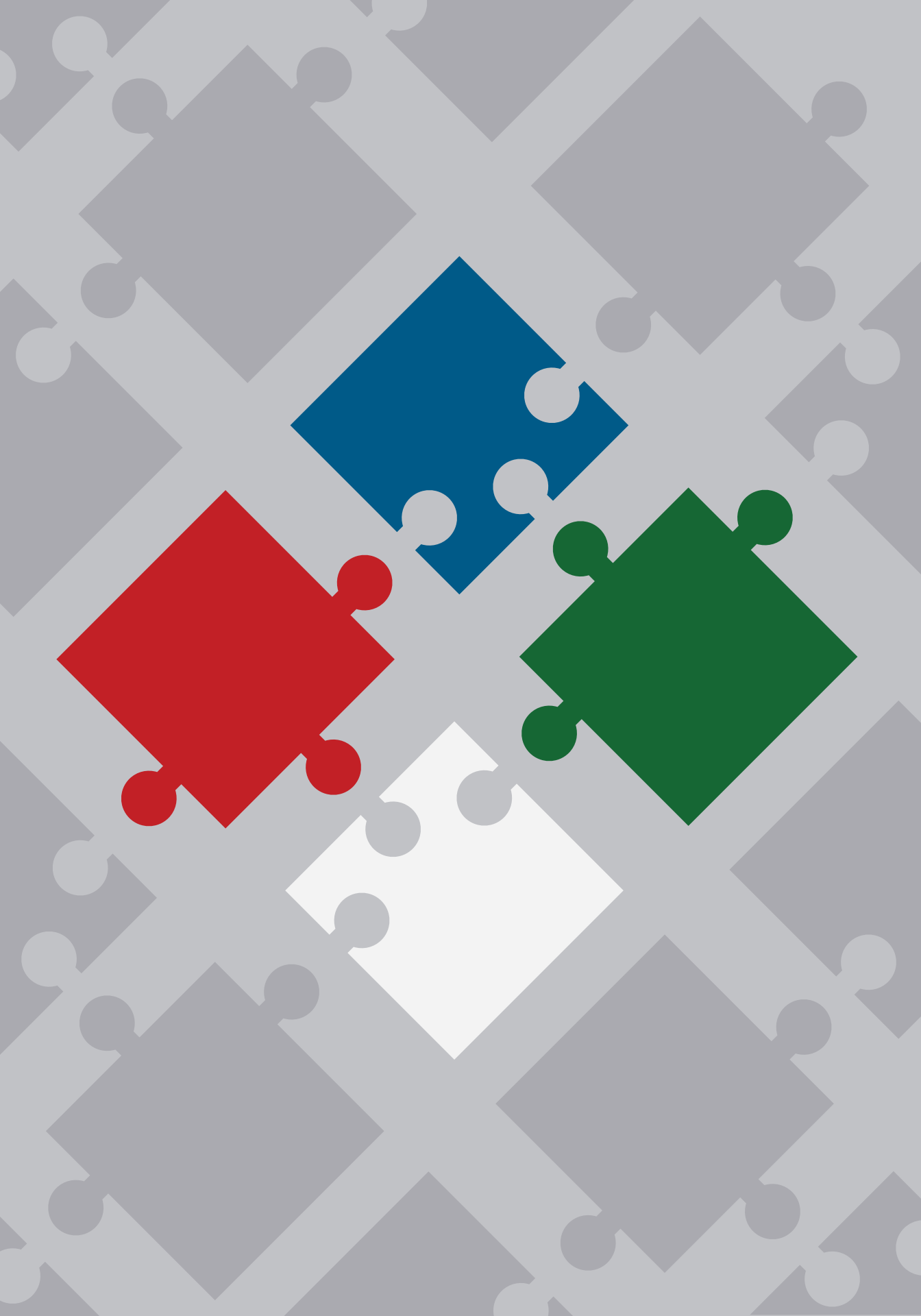
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## Preface

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I am pleased to present the latest publication from the Stimson Center's Japan Program. *International Disaster Response: Rebuilding the Quad?* is the sixth volume of *Views from the Next Generation*, an annual collection of policy briefs that offer recommendations for the most significant challenges facing Japan and its partners today. Contributing to this volume are five leading and emerging scholars from Japan, Australia, India, and the United States who examine the possibility of Quad cooperation in international disaster management.

Writing from the perspectives of their home countries, these authors explore each nation's interests in the Quad and their current policies on humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. Weighing the possible benefits of cooperation, the authors offer practical recommendations for policymakers in each country. The discussions in this volume raise important and timely questions about the role of the Quad nations as a group and their potential to leverage their resources and expertise to respond to disasters more effectively.

I am grateful to Yuki Tatsumi for leading this project as a part of Stimson's work on Japan. Her insights and analysis on international cooperation between the United States and its partners in Asia have solidified her reputation as a serious and pragmatic scholar of the Asia-Pacific region. In this volume she has once again facilitated a substantive dialogue across the Pacific region, and brought new voices to significant public policy conversations. Pamela Kennedy and Jason Li also provided critical support to this publication.

Finally, my colleagues and I are grateful for the continued support of this endeavor from our friends at the Embassy of Japan.

Brian Finlay  
President and CEO  
The Stimson Center

# Acknowledgments

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*International Disaster Response: Rebuilding the Quad?*, the sixth volume of the *Views from the Next Generation* series, has once again been truly a group effort. First, I would like to thank our contributors, Dr. David Envall, Dr. Yasuhito Jibiki, Pamela Kennedy, Kate Stevenson, and Akriti Vasudeva. I appreciate their efforts to take time from their schedules to write on this compelling topic and join us in Washington, D.C. for the launch seminar. I cannot thank them enough for sharing and developing their ideas throughout multiple drafts as we moved towards the final report.

I am also grateful for the encouragement of the Embassy of Japan throughout the years of this project. Without the Embassy's support, this series would not be possible, and I look forward to continuing our collaboration.

As always, I thank my Stimson colleagues for their invaluable support and assistance. Brian Finlay, Stimson's president and chief executive officer, has been enormously supportive of the Japan Program's efforts, including this project, to amplify the voices of emerging scholars and expand dialogue between experts across the Pacific. I am thankful as well for Stimson's Communications team and our talented graphic designer Lita Ledesma, who helped us create this attractive book. I am also grateful to Research Associate Pamela Kennedy (who also penned one of the briefs), Research Assistant Jason Li, and Research Interns Qiongyi Chen, Nagyung Lee, and Taro Sato for assisting with the many details that went into producing the publication.

Finally, this year marks the Japan Program's 20th anniversary. I would like to thank all my friends, colleagues, mentors, and supporters who have supported and encouraged me to continue to build this program since I joined Stimson in 2004.

Yuki Tatsumi

Director, Japan Program; Co-Director, East Asia Program

March 2019



## Abbreviations

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AHA Centre	ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management
ANZUK	Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom
ARDEX	ASEAN Regional Disaster Emergency Response Simulation Exercise
ARF	ASEAN Regional Forum
ARF-DiRex	ARF Disaster Relief Exercise
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AusAID	Australian Aid
AUSMAT	Australian Medical Assistance Teams
CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund
DART	Disaster assistance response teams
ERMA	Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance
FDI	Foreign direct investment
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FESR	Far East Strategic Reserve
FFP	Food for Peace
FOIP	Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy
FTS	Financial Tracking Service
FY	Fiscal year
HA/DR	Humanitarian assistance and disaster relief
IDA	International Disaster Assistance
INTERFET	International Force East Timor
IOR	Indian Ocean Region
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
MOU	Memorandum of understanding
MRA	Migration and Refugee Assistance
NDMA	National Disaster Management Authority
NDRF	National Disaster Response Force
NGO	Non-governmental organization

NSS	National Security Strategy
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OFDA	Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance
RAMSI	Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
TCG	Tsunami Core Group
TSD	Trilateral Security Dialogue
U.N.	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
U.S.	United States
USD	United States dollar
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WFP	World Food Programme

# Introduction

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*Yuki Tatsumi and Jason Li*

The idea of the “Quad” — cooperation among Australia, India, Japan and the United States — first emerged when the four countries played an anchor role in responding to the 2004 Tsunami in the Indian Ocean. A few years later, Japanese prime minister Shinzō Abe provided the vision for Quad cooperation when he spoke in front of the Indian Parliament in August 2007. In his speech entitled “Confluence of the Two Seas,” Abe emphasized the connectivity of the Indian and Pacific Oceans. While the focus of the speech was the strategic significance of Japan-India relations, Abe stressed the importance that this “broader Asia” remain free, open, and transparent for the region’s prosperity.<sup>1</sup> Almost exactly 10 years later, the concept of the Quad resurfaced in 2017 after the United States began to promote the concept of a “free and open Indo-Pacific” as an organizing principle for its strategy toward Asia.<sup>2</sup>

However, while interest in the Quad seemed to have returned when the officials of the four countries met for consultation in November 2017, not much has been done to further develop this relationship. While bilateral and trilateral relationships among the Quad to coordinate their policies toward the Indo-Pacific region continue to develop, as exemplified by the Japan-India agreement on coordinated strategy in infrastructure investment, there are also signs that show discord among the Quad, such as India’s recent refusal to allow Australia’s participation in the Malabar military exercise despite the United States and Japan’s encouragement.

Despite the recent signs of the Quad losing traction yet again, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR) and disaster prevention is one area where all four countries can agree and cooperate. If so, a close look at each country’s thinking behind its HA/DR activities as well as disaster prevention efforts offers a chance to think through opportunities and challenges that the Quad framework holds. Even more ambitiously, can the four countries utilize their cooperation in HA/DR as the foundation to revive the Quad? *International Disaster Response: Rebuilding the Quad?*, the sixth volume of Stimson’s *Views from the Next Generation* series, is a collection of policy briefs by a group of emerging analysts from Australia, India, Japan, and the United States who tackle this question.

In “The ‘Quad’ and Disaster Management: An Australian Perspective,” Kate Stevenson (Fellow, Australia-Japan Research Centre) and H. D. P. Envall (Fellow & Senior Lecturer, Australian National University) examine the numerous opportunities and challenges Australia faces in considering Quad cooperation in HA/DR. They outline key challenges to Quad HA/DR cooperation from an Australian perspective. These include differing commitments and priorities of the four partners, the potential of “high politics” overshadowing policy implementation

due to Chinese perceptions of the Quad, and the possibility that Australia's strong bilateral and civilian traditions of HA/DR could be diminished by multilateral cooperation. However, they note, with Quad cooperation in HA/DR, there is large potential for joint capacity-building across the Indo-Pacific, for Australia-Indian cooperation, and for Australia to play a coordinating leadership role on the multilateral scene. The authors recommend that the Quad clarify its objectives to dispel Chinese suspicions of containment and then that Australia assess whether the Quad would be beneficial for HA/DR policy in the Indo-Pacific.

In "India's Role in Disaster Management: Can the Quad Give It a Leg Up?" Akriti Vasudeva (Research Associate, Stimson Center) argues that Quad cooperation on disaster relief has the potential to strengthen India's capabilities as a net security provider, buttress its image as a growing international power, and bolster its expeditionary operations outside its home waters. Despite challenges like fears that Quad cooperation could provoke Chinese pushback and India's naval limitations, she argues that there is large rhetorical and material value in India pursuing Quad cooperation in disaster response. First, representing a powerful grouping of like-minded democracies, it could act as a symbolic deterrent against China. Second, such cooperation could provide India the equipment, data, and experience to bolster its regional leadership in HA/DR. To mitigate negative Chinese reactions, she recommends that cooperation in disaster response start small — with information and data sharing — before gradually building an interoperable environment to coordinate complementary capabilities and share innovative HA/DR research.

In "A Japanese Perspective on Exploring Quad Cooperation in Disaster Management: The Isolation of India and Distance to ASEAN," Yasuhito Jibiki (Assistant Professor, Tōhoku University) compares HA/DR spending across Quad members and outlines potential challenges to Quad cooperation, including coordination obstacles produced by the significant differences in the funding amongst the Quad members. Other challenges exist, such as the possibility that Quad cooperation may force ASEAN members to choose between Japan's Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy (FOIP) and China's Belt and Road and, in turn, jeopardize the U.S., Japan, or Australia's existing HA/DR coordination with ASEAN. Nevertheless, by situating it within FOIP, he argues that Quad cooperation in HA/DR would be in Japan's national interest and recommends increased opportunities for working-level consultations and greater focus on HA/DR issues within Japanese policy-making.

Finally, in "The U.S. and Quad Disaster Cooperation: A Matter of Political Will," Pamela Kennedy (Research Associate, Stimson Center) stresses the U.S.'s established capabilities in disaster response and the vast potential of U.S. cooperation in HA/DR through the Quad. Cooperation would pool resources and expertise and strengthen partnerships by acting as a trust-building and prestige-saving commitment. By working through existing disaster management mechanisms, the U.S. and its Quad partners could protect regional stability by preventing disasters' catastrophic social and economic impacts. Facing challenges of lack of political

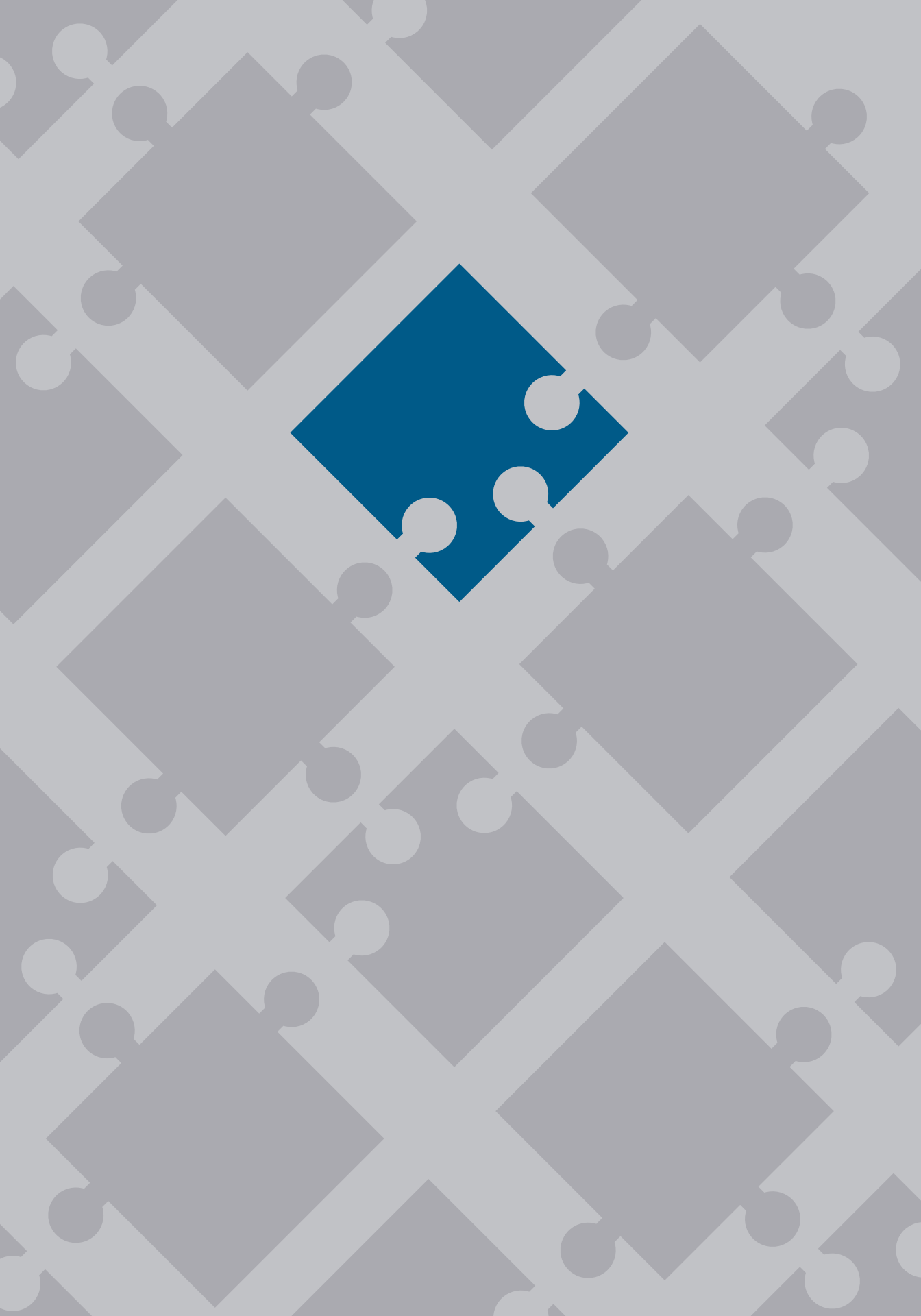
will and the current administration's cuts to foreign assistance, the U.S. should commit itself to a formal commitment mechanism that could insulate disaster response cooperation from domestic political whims. Kennedy recommends that the U.S. increase humanitarian assistance and convene a Quad dialogue to explore the most effective format for Quad cooperation, while consulting with existing relevant organizations to chart a path for the Quad's most successful contribution to disaster response efforts.

We hope that these short policy essays authored by rising experts from Australia, India, Japan and the United States will offer readers new perspectives in the discussion of the prospects for further developing Quad cooperation.

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## Endnotes

1. Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs. "Confluence of the Two Seas." Speech by H.E. Shinzō Abe, Prime Minister of Japan, at the Parliament of the Republic of India. August 22, 2007. Accessed February 25, 2019. <https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/pmv0708/speech-2.html>.
2. The White House. "Remarks by President Trump on His Trip to Asia." November 15, 2017. Accessed February 25, 2019. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-trump-trip-asia/>.



# The “Quad” and Disaster Management: An Australian Perspective

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*Kate Stevenson and H. D. P. Envall*

Australian military disaster relief has matured from reluctant one-off deployments to an accepted piece of Australia’s strategic engagement in the Indo-Pacific. For regional cooperation, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR) provides not only a practical setting for training and joint operations but also a form of international engagement acceptable regardless of political climate. The revival of quadrilateral security consultations bringing together the U.S., Japan, India, and Australia (referred to as the “Quad”) represent a potential avenue for HA/DR and related cooperation as an instrument for international diplomacy. For Australia, this form of engagement could give greater substance and a practical element to regional partnerships, tying together the concept of the Indo-Pacific and bringing India further into regional cooperation. However, existing HA/DR frameworks, the trend toward bilateral disaster relief, and the political tension generated by growing Chinese assertiveness will make it hard to convince skeptics that the Quad is viable as a means of strengthening diplomacy by HA/DR.

## Australian Policy on HA/DR

### Military Beginnings

Australia’s history of HA/DR cooperation highlights the varied strategic objectives linked to the country’s HA/DR goals. The Australian Defence Force first conducted HA/DR operations in 1918, when a medical team on board HMAS *Encounter* was deployed in response to an outbreak of the Spanish flu in Samoa, Fiji, and Tonga. This was not the result of any special willingness to engage in humanitarian activity. Australia’s only other relief contributions in the early twentieth century were financial grants to Sicily in 1908, Russia in 1922, and Japan after the Great Kantō Earthquake in 1923. In 1921 Prime Minister Billy Hughes rejected a domestic request to have Navy vessels stationed in Brisbane and Cairns respond to annual cyclones, stating that this was “outside of the province” of the Navy, which had the primary duty of defending Australia in war.<sup>1</sup> Foreign disaster relief was something approached with reluctance, as an unwanted expense. When the Red Cross and the League of Nations established the International Relief Union in 1932, Australia declined to join for financial reasons.

During the Cold War, humanitarian assistance came to be viewed as part of Australia’s strategy to support non-communist actors. It was also seen as part of

Australia's growing role in the Asia-Pacific region, especially in the South Pacific. In 1959, in its first significant military relief mission, Australia sent army engineers to Vanuatu to repair cyclone damage. Aid grants for disasters, such as those for cyclone relief in Northeast Asia, helped support friendly governments in the region, including Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea.<sup>2</sup> While the government and armed forces were sometimes reluctant to commit resources, HA/DR became an accepted if still infrequent function of defense.

Military-to-military cooperation in disaster relief was not initially a strategy for regional engagement. For Australia, its first incarnation was as a part of the Far East Strategic Reserve (FESR), where Australian personnel joined with British and New Zealand counterparts in Malaya as a forward defense against the spread of communism in Southeast Asia. Malaysian authorities made an ad hoc request through this framework for HA/DR support for a local disaster in 1958. Australia consequently agreed that its soldiers could assist with disaster relief through the FESR under certain conditions. While the arrangements represented a joint framework, they were not cooperation in a practical sense, and the set-up stayed safely inside the boundaries of the British Commonwealth. The FESR was replaced in 1971 by the Australian-led ANZUK (Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom), and the entire organization was quietly folded in 1975, replaced by the Five Power Defence Arrangements.

After the Cold War, Australia began to raise its international profile by increasing its engagement in humanitarian activities. The focus, however, was primarily on peacekeeping: in Cambodia in 1991, in Bougainville in the late 1990s, in the International Force East Timor (INTERFET) mission to Timor-Leste in 1998, as well as in the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) in the late 1990s and early 2000s.<sup>3</sup> Australia also sent forces for stabilization and recovery efforts (Operation CATALYST, from July 2003 to July 2009) to Iraq, following its engagement in the initial intervention under Operation FALCONER.<sup>4</sup> Disaster relief as a means of international cooperation was not initially on the radar of Australian policy.

## **Ripples from the Tsunami**

The 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami was a major awakening for Australia on the impact of natural disasters in the Indo-Pacific.<sup>5</sup> Accordingly, the country played an active role in the "Tsunami Core Group" (TCG), which was formed by Australia, the U.S., Japan, and India to respond to the crisis. It was from the TCG that the initial idea of the Quad was born. As a middle power working with modest resources, Australia has built partnerships through a variety of mechanisms as a valuable means to maximize influence through "niche diplomacy."<sup>6</sup> Indeed, the TCG and its HA/DR activities helped to boost Australia's ties to India, Japan, and the U.S. and improve its relations with Indonesia, one of the main relief recipients. Henceforth, Australia became more open to fully institutionalized, multilateral HA/DR cooperation.



The 2004 disaster also served to consolidate Australia's civilian medical capacity for international disaster relief. After the tsunami, four medical teams were deployed to Banda Aceh, the Maldives, and Thailand.<sup>7</sup> This was Australia's first organized civilian assistance effort; previous civilian involvement tended to be by individuals working for non-governmental organizations. However reluctant, the Australian Defence Force had traditionally provided the mainstay of human and material resources for overseas relief.<sup>8</sup> Following the tsunami, the basic management and training for Australian Medical Assistance Teams (AUSMAT) was allocated to state and territory health departments. International deployments would be decided in coordination with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Department of Health, and Emergency Management Australia. Training would be provided by the National Critical Care and Trauma Response Centre in Darwin. In addition to medical capabilities, Australia also has civilian disaster assistance response teams (DART) for urban search and rescue. Since 2004, both DART and AUSMAT have worked closely with the Australian military on international deployments.

### Australia's Contemporary HA/DR Rationale

The central rationale of Australia's HA/DR policy is based around the goals of alleviating suffering, preserving human dignity, and, most importantly, saving lives. This position is laid out in the government's *Humanitarian Strategy* paper of May 2016. The paper also lists four strategic objectives for the Australian government:

- strengthening international humanitarian action, notably in the Indo-Pacific region;
- reducing disaster risk through the implementation of long-term strategies and investment in capabilities;
- supporting other countries to better respond to disasters through effective HA/DR; and
- supporting rapid recovery and redevelopment following disasters.<sup>9</sup>

As Athol Yates and Anthony Bergin point out, Australia, like other countries, also pursues a range of associated objectives when it comes to deploying defense forces in HA/DR operations.<sup>10</sup> Australia's 2016 *Defence White Paper* links HA/DR activities to a variety of strategic objectives, including improving regional stability (especially in the South Pacific), denying safe havens for terrorists, and boosting multilateral partnerships (e.g. with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations – ASEAN).<sup>11</sup>

HA/DR has also been used as a means of justifying the acquisition of new defense capabilities and, as such, has been a feature in long-term defense planning. The acquisition of two Landing Helicopter Docks built for the Royal Australian Navy was justified on the basis of HA/DR needs.<sup>12</sup> The maiden voyage of the first of these, HMAS *Canberra*, was an HA/DR mission to Fiji after Tropical Cyclone Winston in

2016.<sup>13</sup> More recently, HMAS *Canberra* took part in Exercise OCEAN EXPLORER, an initiative to test the Navy's capability in sea operations for maritime security, humanitarian assistance, and warfare, including cooperation with the naval vessels from New Zealand and the UK.<sup>14</sup>

## Quadrilateral to Trilateral and Back?

While the Quad was born from HA/DR under the TCG, it was soon caught up in great power politics and lost momentum not long after it was proposed in 2006. Importantly, key actors who had pushed the initial idea soon departed the political scene. Japan's Prime Minister Shinzō Abe stepped down in September 2007, while the Indian government became increasingly concerned about Chinese reactions to the initiative. The U.S. government was unenthusiastic because its "priority" was the Trilateral Security Dialogue (TSD), composed of the U.S., Australia, and Japan. In Australian politics, also, there were growing concerns that the Quad represented a prototype for a "quadripartite security alliance" that excluded China — a growing presence and Australia's largest trading partner.<sup>15</sup>

Australia was particularly sensitive at this time to criticism from Beijing that the Quad was a mechanism to contain its presence in the region. The election in 2007 of a Labor government led by Kevin Rudd, an opponent of the Quad, led to abrupt withdrawal. Rudd's government favored expanding relations with China and therefore preferred the TSD as a less provocative means of dialogue.<sup>16</sup> As the Quad faded, Australia focused on other forums, including the TSD, for disaster-relief engagement. HA/DR cooperation between TSD partners already had an established record. In the mid-1990s, for instance, the U.S. and Japan had agreed to cooperate more on HA/DR not just bilaterally but also at the regional and global levels.<sup>17</sup> The Indian Ocean tsunami had also prompted closer cooperation. In June 2008, the three TSD partners agreed on a plan to increase cooperation on HA/DR. A key aim was to "build understanding of respective emergency response procedures and capabilities."<sup>18</sup> As a result, several HA/DR operations were carried out over 2009–2010.<sup>19</sup> For Australia and Japan, however, direct bilateral engagement did not acquire a framework until the Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation in 2007 and no real substance until 2011, when Australia's contribution to the Tōhoku disaster response showed that defense coordination independent of the U.S. was actually possible.<sup>20</sup> As a whole, the period from 2004 through to the mid-2010s saw Indo-Pacific countries take an active interest in international coordination and capacity building for disaster response and prevention.

By contrast, the return of the Quad in late 2017 represents a shift back to a focus on more traditional security concerns. Ideas about a "free and open Indo-Pacific" and a "rules-based" order — in opposition to China's "community of common destiny" and Belt and Road Initiative — point to greater competition over how the region should operate.<sup>21</sup> Issues such as denuclearization on the Korean peninsula, stopping militarization of the South China Sea, and improving cooperation on

maritime security have become central to the Quad.<sup>22</sup> Likewise, much has changed in terms of the four partners' attitudes toward the region. Australia has shifted to a less conciliatory stance on China in the wake of political donation scandals, cyber-espionage incidents, and various diplomatic spats.<sup>23</sup> The question then becomes whether the Quad is an appropriate forum for HA/DR, if other issues dominate the agenda.

## Opportunities and Challenges

The revival of the Quad, therefore, offers both opportunities and challenges for greater HA/DR cooperation. Perhaps the central challenge concerns whether the renewed emphasis on the high politics of strategic rivalry — in other words, how the Quad is to interact with China — will leave space for “low politics,” including policies and engagement central to HA/DR.<sup>24</sup> A renewed Quad inevitably raises questions about whether the forum is a mechanism for containing China. Indeed, this constitutes a major debate in Australia today. As Greg Raymond notes, a more robust, formalized Quad may simply confirm Chinese suspicions of encirclement.<sup>25</sup>

The lack of clarity surrounding the Quad's central purpose also highlights problems of strategic alignment between the four partners. In Australia, critics of the Quad ask why Australia would join together with major powers who are in competition with China when to them it “flies in the face” of decades of positive policy — and especially trade — engagement.<sup>26</sup> In fact, there is now much evidence that Australia too has become entangled in a broader strategic competition with China, with the country and its politicians becoming more willing to criticize Chinese policy and express solidarity with the U.S. and Japan.<sup>27</sup> Yet Australia, with its own regional interests and at a significant geographical distance from China, has different interests from the other three countries. India's pursuit of “multi-alignment” and partnerships that are not held hostage to the strategic agendas of other states sets it apart from Australia, Japan, and the U.S.<sup>28</sup> Japan on the other hand is starting to take a stronger position, holding ground on the territorial dispute over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands and seeking to reform its security posture in the face of growing Chinese assertiveness.<sup>29</sup> The U.S. under President Donald Trump has engaged in diplomatic hostilities that may become a full-fledged trade war with China, much to the horror of Australian policymakers.<sup>30</sup> The Quad is so associated with these issues that it could limit engagement even on HA/DR.

Then there are the challenges for the Quad related specifically to HA/DR. First, military and civilian involvement in disaster relief and prevention is primarily done on a bilateral basis. The U.S. and Australia provided military and civilian resources to Japan after the Tōhoku earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear disaster in March 2011 by bilateral agreement.<sup>31</sup> After Typhoon Haiyan in 2013, the Philippines made bilateral requests for assistance. In Nepal in 2015, while the U.N. provided the framework to manage relief, the agreements on providing resources were again largely bilateral. For Australia, it arguably makes less sense to attempt to shift such

bilateral efforts into a minilateral effort such as the Quad, especially when regional forums such as ASEAN, the East Asia Summit, the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), or its ARF Disaster Relief Exercise (ARF-DiRex) are already established and accepted means of promoting disaster relief and related cooperation. These frameworks avoid the “high politics” linked to the Quad and provide the capacity building and common understanding for more flexible approaches to civilian and military HA/DR deployments.

Second, because it focuses on major security issues, the Quad is at odds with the civilian tradition of disaster response and preparedness. While militaries are increasingly accepted as important actors for fast and efficient relief, the basic principle is to maintain civilian leadership. It is an important principle to which Australia continues to subscribe. Further, Australia — and indeed also Japan — has excellent records with their civilian search-and-rescue and medical teams. Military HA/DR can in many cases be slower and more costly than civilian deployments (the U.S. with its extensive bases and resources overseas being a notable exception).<sup>a</sup> Quad-based efforts to coordinate overseas disaster responses may simply override or complicate the effective use of these well-established civilian capabilities.<sup>b</sup>

Third, coordination on HA/DR through the Quad may also be hampered by the need for equality amongst partners. Greater alignment would be required, not only in terms of shared strategic goals but also in terms of sharing and deploying resources. Marc Grossman argues that a key feature of the TCG was the commitment of the parties to spend “serious money” on relief operations.<sup>32</sup> However, it is not clear that there is the same level of commitment to the Quad or joint disaster response. In fact, all four partners are currently too distracted by regional concerns, strategic rivalries, or domestic populism to invest resources in an Indo-Pacific approach to HA/DR. Even Japan’s capacity for international HA/DR is uncertain in light of the country’s defense force restructure and shift back to traditional security priorities.<sup>33</sup> Australia may be more keen to act on HA/DR in the South Pacific, especially in response to the recent surge in Chinese activities including FDI, developmental assistance, infrastructure projects, high-level diplomatic visits, military aid, and port calls with the *Peace Ark* hospital ship.<sup>34</sup> It is not clear, however, that the other members, perhaps with the exception of Japan, share this interest. Again, Australian priorities may be more effectively achieved through bilateral cooperation with Japan in this area.

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a. The process for deploying the JSDF, for example, is often time-consuming and can miss the initial “golden period” for foreign disaster response. A common view in Japan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Defense is that civilian teams on commercial aircraft can reach disaster zones much faster, in part because civilian teams can be so readily mobilized and in part because a commercial aircraft avoids the need to request permission for military aircraft to fly through other countries’ airspace.

b. Both Australia and Japan’s search and rescue teams are qualified as “heavy” (top-level) teams evaluated by the International Urban Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG). Japan’s medical teams acquired a “Type 2” classification under the WHO Emergency Medical Team (EMT) system in 2016, following a gradual buildup in capabilities from the Bam Earthquake in Iran in 2003 to the 2015 earthquake in Nepal. Australia’s AUSMAT teams have the same EMT qualification. The Israel Defense Force Medical Corps and the China International Emergency Medical Team (Sichuan) are the only teams with verified “Type 3” hospital capacity, including for complex surgery and beds and care for up to 100 patients. See the World Health Organization website: <https://extranet.who.int/emt/emt-classification>.

## Policy Recommendations for Australia

Turning the Quad into an effective international body would require a number of new initiatives. Problematically, however, the questions of high politics “obscure more practical, and more interesting, questions about ... what benefits could accrue to members of the Quad outside the realm of grand strategy.”<sup>35</sup>

Ian Hall argues that the Quad requires greater communication of key objectives, more efficient policy coordination, a more focused agenda, and potentially a diversification of membership. Importantly, the idea of the Quad as a mechanism to contain China would have to be dispelled.<sup>36</sup> Focusing the Quad on issues such as HA/DR could help provide the group with a clearer range of objectives that overcome the suspicions currently raised about its central purpose. With HA/DR as a relatively straightforward area for “niche” diplomacy, the Quad may appeal to a middle power such as Australia.

Certainly, there are ample opportunities for greater cooperation on HA/DR through a regional framework such as the Quad. Joint capacity building, including information sharing and the transfer of “know-how” regarding relief operations, could do much to improve HA/DR engagement and disaster preparedness across the Indo-Pacific. For Australia, the Quad may also be an opportunity to engage with India on HA/DR and other mutual concerns such as maritime security. Undeniably, Australia could do more to engage India. Existing bilateral cooperation falls well behind its engagements with Japan and the U.S. Australia also remains outside the India-U.S.-Japan Malabar naval exercises.<sup>37</sup> India has significant HA/DR capabilities that could be more fully plugged into the broader region through the Quad. Its efforts to create disaster management mechanisms through the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) have progressed only slowly.<sup>38</sup>

Finally, the Quad could be used to coordinate better institutional frameworks within and between the four partners. Australia could take a leadership position in this regard, especially in light of its experience helping to coordinate cooperation between multiple countries in the search for missing Malaysian Airlines Flight 370.<sup>39</sup> Darwin might offer a valuable hub for regional HA/DR training exercises.<sup>40</sup> This, along with the training programs provided by the Australian Civil Military Centre and AUSMAT, could also underpin Australian contributions. First, however, Australia should assess whether the Quad will be beneficial for HA/DR policy in the region. If such a case exists, Australia should then clarify its commitment to the Quad and outline its vision for the Quad’s future as a key HA/DR forum.

## Endnotes

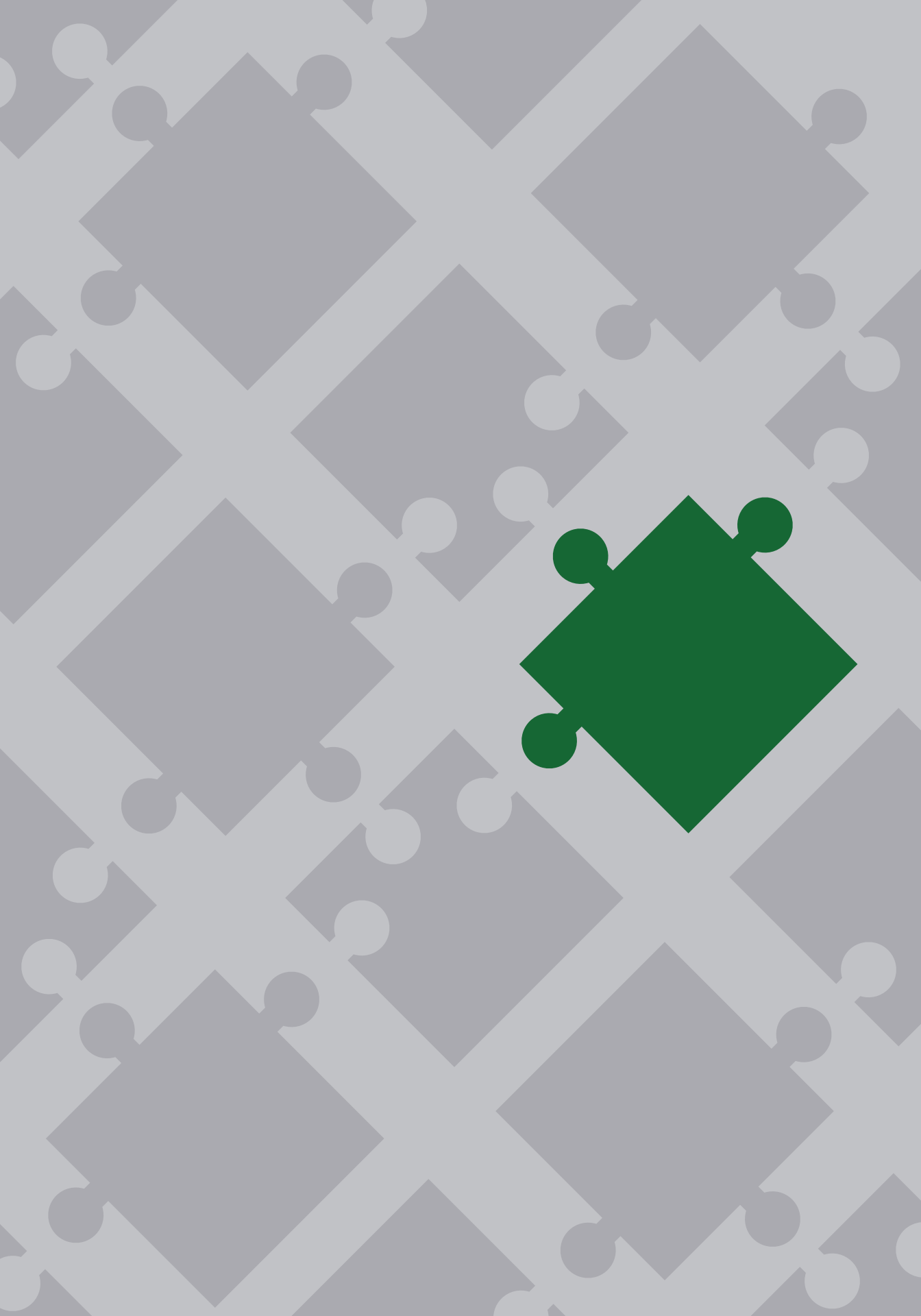
1. Bullard, Steven. *In Their Time of Need: Australia's Overseas Emergency Relief Operations, 1918–2006*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017. 19-22.
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# India's Role in Disaster Management: Can the Quad Give It a Leg Up?

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The Indo-Pacific<sup>1</sup> is the most disaster-prone region in the world, with a person living in this region being five times more vulnerable to natural disasters than those living elsewhere.<sup>2</sup> For the most part, this region is made up of developing countries that may not have adequate capabilities or resources to deal with such a challenge. Thus, support from the Quad countries (comprising Australia, India, Japan, and the United States) that possess experience and assets to mitigate these risks will be welcome. In fact, the very idea of a Quad emerged from the joint effort of these four countries in providing disaster relief during the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. For India, engaging with the members of the Quad on disaster relief has the potential to strengthen its capabilities as a net security provider, in turn buttressing its image as a growing international power, and bolstering its experience with expeditionary operations outside its home waters as its concerns about maritime competition with China grow. And though challenges exist, such as a potential negative reaction from Beijing and resource constraints, there may be space to moderate them and explore such cooperation to secure Indian interests.

## India's Policy on International Disaster Relief

India is among the countries most exposed to natural disasters globally, regularly experiencing events such as cyclones, earthquakes, floods, and drought throughout its landmass due to its geoclimatic conditions.<sup>3</sup> Between 1998 and 2017, India lost USD 79.5 billion in economic costs due to climate-induced disasters.<sup>4</sup> Being so vulnerable to disasters, India has been pushed to develop capabilities to deal with such challenges. After a devastating earthquake in the western state of Gujarat in 2001, India established the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), an agency at the federal level under the Ministry of Home Affairs to formulate laws and guidelines to prepare for, manage, and prevent damage from natural disasters.<sup>5</sup> NDMA drafted the key piece of legislation that governs the implementation of India's disaster management plans, the Disaster Management Act, 2005. It also established the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), a dedicated, multi-disciplinary force made up of personnel on deputation from Indian police and paramilitary forces to deal with the immediate aftermath of a disaster.

Though most of India's disaster relief activities are focused on dealing with events at home, the imperative to maintain friendly relations with its neighbors even as it grows at a frenetic pace and a recognition of its role as a consequential regional and global actor have led New Delhi to contribute to disaster relief efforts outside its borders.

India's participation in international disaster relief<sup>6</sup> has primarily been through its navy, though the air force and army have also been involved in some operations. The Indian Navy recognizes humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR) in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) as a key aspect of its maritime security strategy.<sup>7</sup> Not just for the military, HA/DR is a priority for the political establishment as well; Prime Minister Narendra Modi has articulated in various speeches that natural disasters are a common regional challenge and responding to them effectively is one of India's key maritime objectives.<sup>8</sup>

Perhaps the most widely recognized contribution is the leading role India played as part of the multilateral effort to aid and stabilize countries such as Sri Lanka, Indonesia, and the Maldives in the aftermath of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. The Indian Navy sent 32 ships, seven aircraft, and 20 helicopters as part of five operations (two domestic and three international) to render assistance to the affected areas.<sup>9</sup> Another mammoth effort that received international attention was India responding to and ensuring recovery after the 2015 earthquake in Nepal.<sup>10</sup> According to Indian foreign minister Sushma Swaraj, it was India's "largest ever disaster assistance effort abroad,"<sup>11</sup> carried out by the air force, army, and the NDRF over a month, evacuating over 5,000 people and carrying over 1,300 tons of food and supplies.<sup>12</sup> Other smaller-scale but notable contributions<sup>13</sup> include: i) the Indian air force and navy's dispatch of food, relief materials, and medical supplies to Bangladesh in the aftermath of Cyclone Sidr in 2007;<sup>14</sup> ii) disaster assistance worth USD 1.3 million to Myanmar after Cyclone Nargis in 2008<sup>15</sup> and iii) the navy's rescue of 33 Bangladeshi fishermen in addition to provision of relief supplies to Bangladesh and Myanmar during Cyclone Mora in 2017.<sup>16</sup> Further from home, India's NDRF was deployed to Onagawa, Japan in the aftermath of the Fukushima earthquake and tsunami to help search for missing persons<sup>17</sup> and India donated USD 5 million to the American Red Cross in support of their efforts after Hurricane Katrina in the United States in addition to sending essential medicines and a medical team.<sup>18</sup>

India has also engaged with countries inside and outside the region, in a bilateral or multilateral setting, to cooperate on disaster management, including with members of the Quad. India has a bilateral MOU with Japan to exchange best practices in disaster management and prevention<sup>19</sup> and the air forces of the two countries recently conducted their first exercise together, which was focused on HA/DR. Washington and New Delhi's military cooperation on HA/DR was first mentioned in the 2005 New Framework for the U.S.-India Defense Relationship and repeated in the 2015 version.<sup>20</sup> The two countries also launched the U.S.-India Disaster Relief Initiative in 2005 to work together to build capability to improve their response to future disasters<sup>21</sup> and have also incorporated disaster scenarios into their existing military exercises.<sup>22</sup> The two countries are now planning their first tri-services exercise, which is expected to be centered on HA/DR.<sup>23</sup> Of all the Quad countries, India's disaster cooperation with Australia is the weakest, though the two do interact through their bilateral naval exercise AUSINDEX,<sup>24</sup> their participation in the Indian Ocean Rim Association, and as part of India's multilateral naval exercise Milan, which Australia has frequently joined.<sup>25</sup>

## Opportunities and Challenges

### Quad Cooperation on HA/DR: Exploring India's Motivations

There are compelling reasons for India to consider a model of cooperation on disaster management with the United States, Japan, and Australia in a Quad setting.

#### *To bolster its image as a net security provider*

The Indian Navy's maritime security strategy of 2015 sees HA/DR as a way of reinforcing India's net security provider credentials in the IOR and playing up its "benign" role in the region to achieve its objectives of soft power projection.<sup>26</sup> Thus, cooperating with the Quad on HA/DR can be a relatively inexpensive, asymmetric way for India to present itself as a purveyor of public goods in the region. This is especially relevant with India battling to maintain influence in its immediate neighborhood of South Asia as China makes inroads into the region<sup>27</sup> and being unable to beat China in offering huge investments and economic development projects to these countries.

Though India has consistently provided assistance to countries on the subcontinent in times of disaster, it still retains its image of being a "big brother" to its smaller neighboring states because of its size, economic heft, and tendency to influence their domestic affairs. However, India's assistance to these countries in a multilateral setting, such as through the Quad, instead of in the bilateral realm could mitigate some of these concerns; it may help dispel any notion among India's neighbors that it is trying to monopolize relief efforts for reputational benefits or to use as leverage. This could help India build trust and goodwill with its neighbors, offsetting its "big brother" image somewhat. Another potential benefit of this cooperation is that it can help India expand the scope of its HA/DR operations beyond the IOR, giving it the experience of expeditionary operations far from its home waters<sup>28</sup> and generating goodwill for New Delhi among countries it has not substantially engaged with, such as the Pacific Island states.

#### *Testing out the utility of Quad cooperation*

India has had some reservations about projecting the Quad as a hard security mechanism due to concerns about unnecessarily antagonizing China,<sup>29</sup> with which it has an active border dispute. India has also tried to underplay the politico-military value of the Quad to mitigate the concerns of ASEAN nations,<sup>30</sup> who do not want to have to choose between China and the Quad. In such a situation, making HA/DR the focus of the Quad could be a useful way for India and the others to test the utility of the grouping beyond a consultative mechanism and gauge the reaction of stakeholders in the region. Since the United States, India, Japan, and Australia already have experience working closely with each other during the Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004, HA/DR cooperation is fairly low-hanging fruit. Giving the Quad an HA/DR focus will also help soften its image as a hard security mechanism aimed at deriving strategic benefits and bill it more as a cooperative tool to achieve shared security from natural disasters for the collective good of all.

### *Burden-sharing and transfer of knowledge*

Considering the frequency and scale of disasters in India and its neighborhood as well as the resource challenges New Delhi faces, Quad cooperation can bring India much-needed burden-sharing. This can be in the form of common use of disaster equipment and supplies and maybe even sharing technology.<sup>31</sup> In addition, with the United States, Japan, and Australia each possessing a different set of expertise in disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, recovery, and reconstruction, India can enhance its knowledge and capabilities in the process of working with these countries.

### **Challenges to Indian Engagement in a Quad Setting**

Thus, engaging in HA/DR cooperation with the Quad countries can be a value-add for India. However, India may be dissuaded from going forward due to the following considerations:

#### *Fears of playing into the Chinese narrative*

Beijing is concerned that the Quad grouping may become a military alliance meant to contain its rise. But since the meetings have only been consultative so far and the countries have not articulated a clear action item for cooperation, China has dismissed the Quad, saying it will disappear like “foam on the sea.”<sup>32</sup> However, cooperation on HA/DR makes the Quad a tangible initiative that China could view as a confirmation of its worst fears and act out. For India, which lags woefully behind China in terms of military capabilities and which would want to avoid another standoff like Doklam<sup>33</sup> in 2017, it would have to analyze whether the benefits of this cooperation are worth the risks.

#### *Complexity of quadrilateral cooperation*

India has already developed bilateral habits of cooperation with the United States and Japan. In such a case, it may see little incentive to quadrilateralize this cooperation due to the complexity that would add. There is also the sense among some Indian experts that since the United States, Japan, Australia, and India were able to do disaster relief together in 2004 in an ad hoc manner, there may not be a need to formalize Quad cooperation, especially to duck any scrutiny from China.<sup>34</sup>

#### *Strategic sensitivities*

Even though India’s strategic vision for the Indo-Pacific overlaps with those of the other members of the Quad, New Delhi might have some sensitivities in working with them. For one, due to its colonial past, India is hesitant to let foreign powers be involved in what it sees as its sphere of influence. Second, India’s approach to disaster relief varies from that of the West in that its response to a disaster is triggered by an express request from the host country, based on respect for its territorial sovereignty, and not by an impulse for humanitarian intervention.<sup>35</sup> This Indian view may differ from U.S. perceptions and may complicate efforts to work together.

### *Resource constraints*

From the Indian perspective, though the Indian Navy's goal is to expand its HA/DR presence and portfolio, it has limited resources. The navy's budget is the smallest of the three services in India<sup>36</sup> and as it competes with China to retain its influence in the IOR, it may choose to prioritize its hard power capabilities instead of disaster relief operations.

## **Policy Recommendations for India**

Due to the challenges outlined above, it is understandable for India to be deterred from pursuing the Quad. However, some of these challenges can be turned into opportunities by careful and shrewd policymaking. Consider this: being a part of the Quad has two types of value for India, symbolic/rhetorical and material. The symbolic/rhetorical value is that the very existence of the Quad is a deterrent to China — that four democracies with such economic and military power who believe in a rules-based order are joining together to protect their vision of the region has China worried, and that is a powerful incentive to be a member of this grouping.<sup>37</sup> As Col. Sarabjeet Parmar notes, “Maritime engagement in terms of HA/DR ... could be the starting point to establish a better international order at sea.”<sup>38</sup> Thus, no matter how much complexity the quadrilateral format adds to cooperation, it is worth pursuing for India.

Then there is the practical or material value India is likely to gain — the tools, equipment, data, and experience required to bolster its leadership in HA/DR in its immediate neighborhood and expand it beyond its traditional area of responsibility.

Of course, India must calibrate its policy keeping the Chinese reaction in mind, and thus the following recommendations balance the need to take concrete action to strengthen material cooperation on HA/DR in a Quad framework and a symbolic demonstration of the deterrent value of the Quad:

### *Invite Australia to join Malabar and do an HA/DR exercise*

India should consider reversing its decision to exclude Australia from its trilateral naval exercise Malabar with the United States and Japan, even if as a one-off. It is worth doing this to demonstrate to Beijing that Quad cooperation can be dialed up if China continues its aggressive behavior in the region. To soften the threat potential of such an action, the focus of the exercise can be on HA/DR and be billed as Quad countries preparing for an eventuality in which they may have to respond jointly to a calamity in the region. Doing it as a noncommittal, one-time experiment can give India the space to dial down based on China's reaction.

### *Propose information and data sharing*

To avoid Chinese ire but strengthen capabilities to work together, the Quad can start small, by putting the building blocks in place for an interoperable environment. As Arzan Tarapore argues, the value of the Quad may be to “coordinate the development

of complementary capabilities.<sup>39</sup> The Quad should consider data and knowledge sharing to prepare a base for common assessment of disasters in the Indo-Pacific. Between the United States, India, Japan, and Australia, the Quad can cover the entire Indo-Pacific in terms of monitoring the region for disasters such as cyclones, earthquakes, and tsunamis. For instance, India has developed a tsunami-alert system for the Indian Ocean,<sup>40</sup> Japan has an earthquake warning system, the United States has various tools for tracking disaster vulnerabilities, and Australia also has a tsunami warning system focused on the Pacific Ocean.<sup>41</sup> India can take the lead in collecting and analyzing this data for the shared use of all four countries, as it has done with the Information Fusion Centre for the Indian Ocean Region.<sup>42</sup>

### *Joint research on disaster management technology*

Technology has the potential to make every stage of the pre and post disaster cycle much more effective. With all four Quad countries known for their innovation, they can collaborate on research to develop technological solutions to make communication during a crisis much more streamlined or ways to intelligently interpret the large amount of data available during a disaster and how to utilize it to craft an effective response. New Delhi has expressed interest in such technology in Track 1.5 forums. The United States and Japan are already involved in such collaboration through joint projects between their universities and research organizations.<sup>43</sup> This program can be expanded to include India and Australia or a similar one developed for the Quad.

These options further the agenda of the Quad and can bring India both material and symbolic value from its association with the grouping, helping New Delhi achieve its national and foreign policy objectives.

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## Endnotes

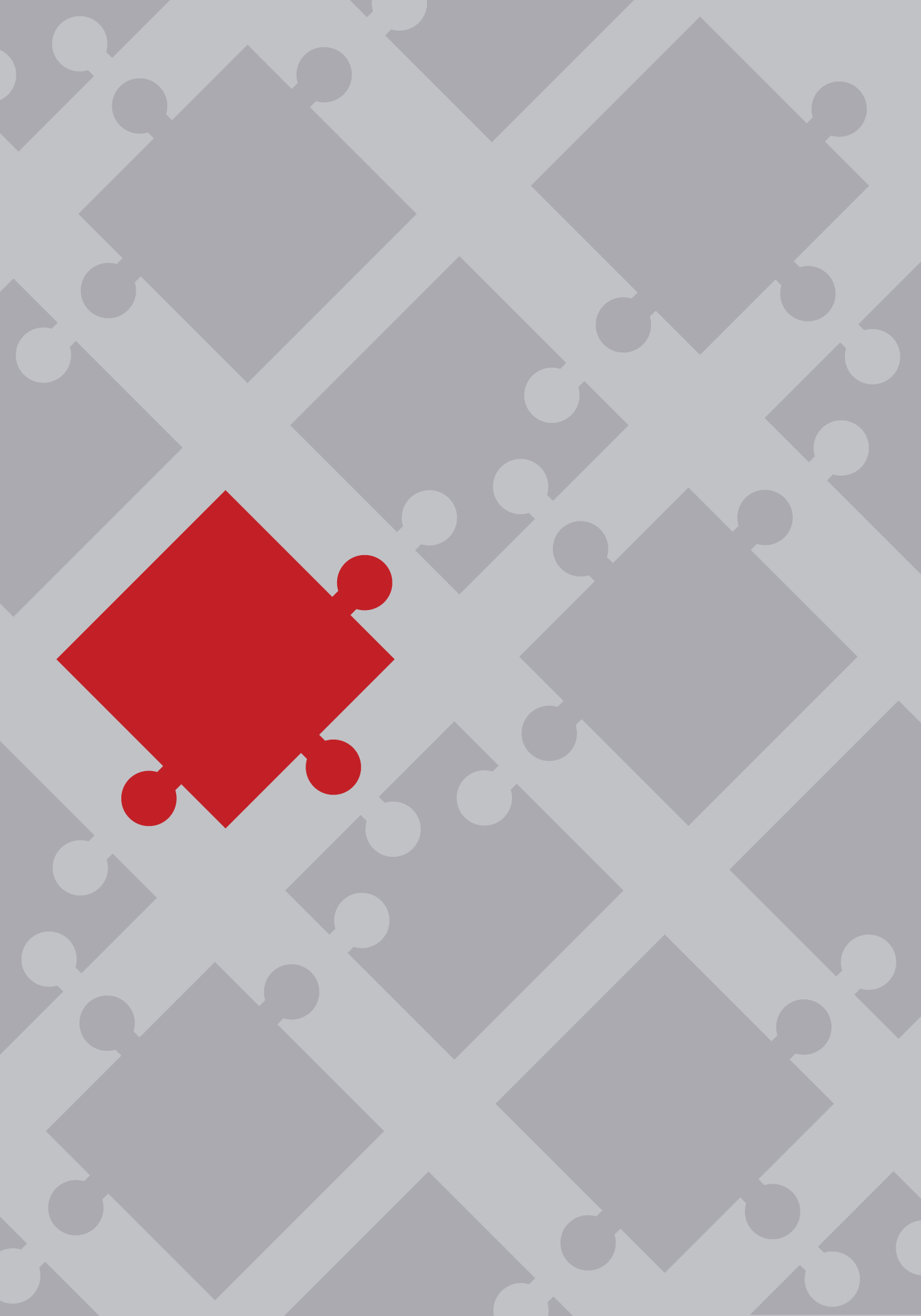
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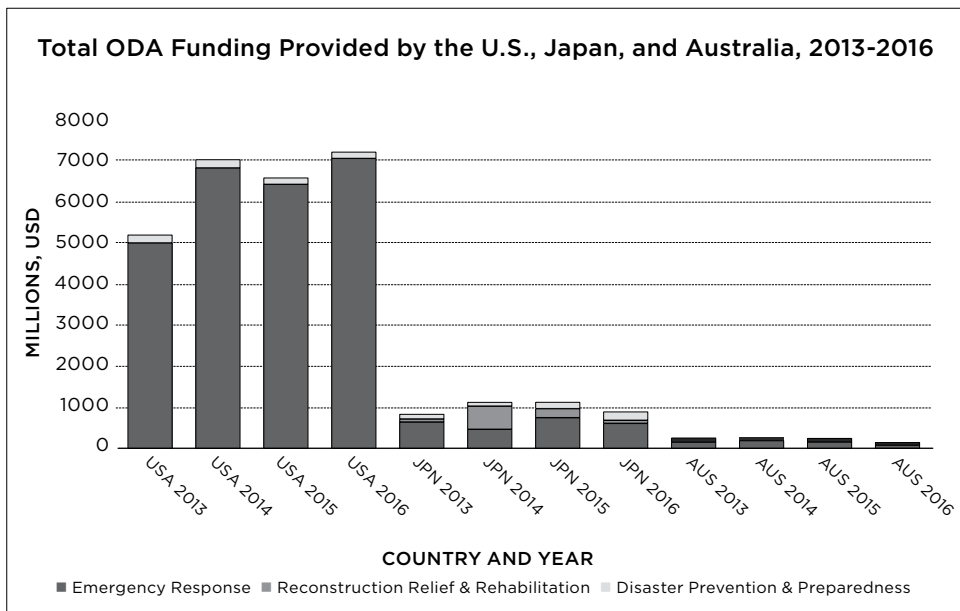
# A Japanese Perspective on Exploring Quad Cooperation in Disaster Management: The Isolation of India and Distance to ASEAN

*Yasuhito Jibiki*

This briefing paper aims to clarify the policy of the government of Japan on its international contribution in the field of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR), and then examine the possibility of cooperation by the Quad (the U.S., Japan, Australia, and India) in HA/DR.

First, we review how each government of the Quad has been carrying out its own HA/DR activities, from the viewpoint of financial contribution. Then we assess:

- The policy of the government of Japan on its international contribution to HA/DR;
- Whether Quad cooperation in the area of HA/DR is in Japanese national interest;
- Challenges to promoting cooperation among the Quad in the area of HA/DR from the viewpoint of Japan; and
- Policy recommendations for the government of Japan.



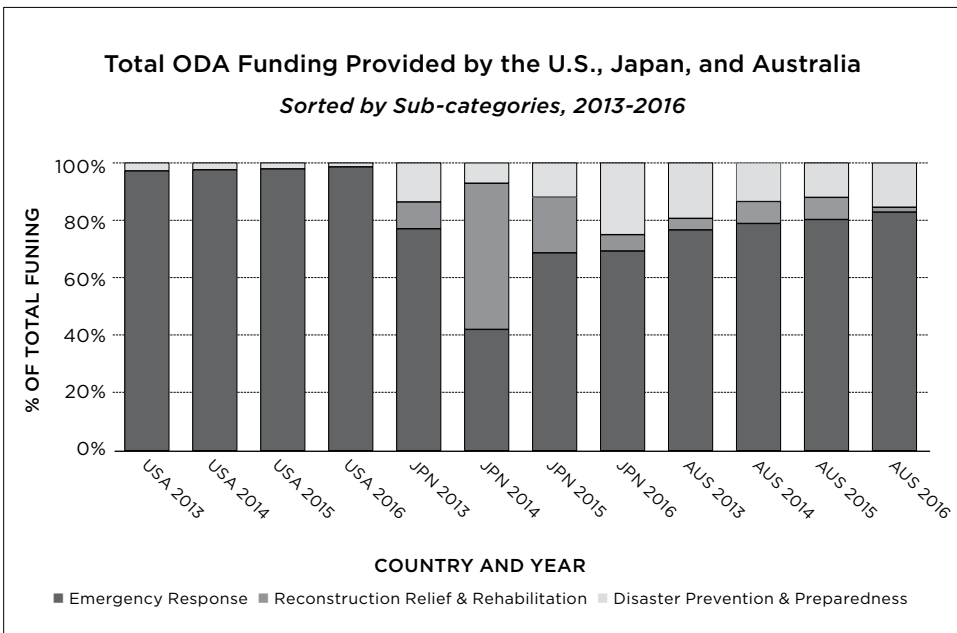
**Figure 1.** Source: Author, based on data generated from OECD.Stat.

For analysis here, we use two databases, OECD.Stat and the Financial Tracking Service (FTS).<sup>1</sup> OECD.Stat is run by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The FTS is managed by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

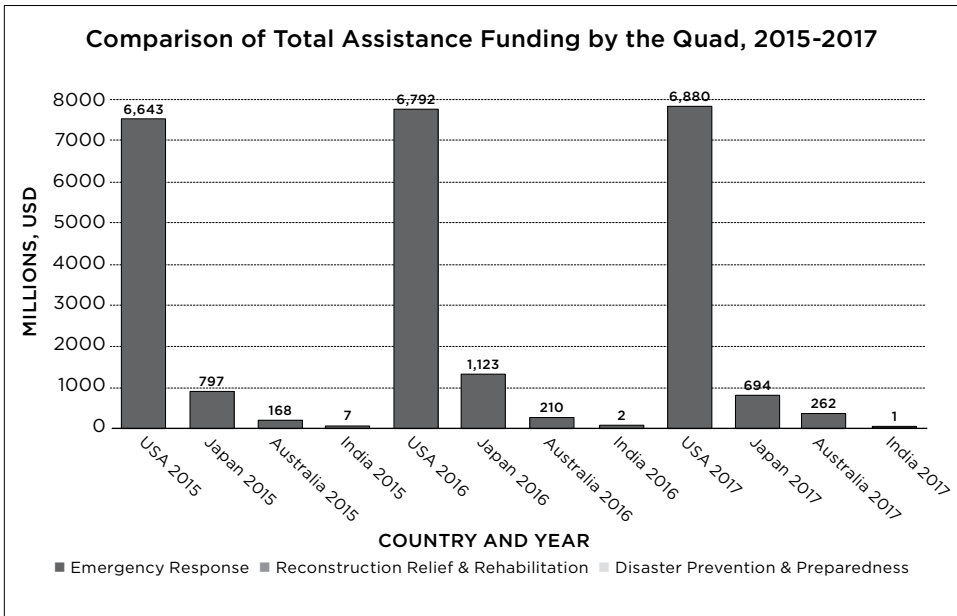
In OECD.Stat, there are sub-categories that compose the main category of total humanitarian aid: emergency response, reconstruction relief & rehabilitation, and disaster prevention & preparedness. A limitation of this database is that it does not contain data for the government of India.

Reviewing the last four years' data (2013-2016), we find that

- The total amount of funding provided by the U.S. government is larger than those of Japan and Australia (see Figure 1);
- In the U.S., the disbursement of funding to emergency response is overwhelmingly larger than those to reconstruction relief & rehabilitation and disaster prevention & preparedness (see Figure 2); and
- The Japanese and Australian governments provided a relatively higher proportion of their total funding to reconstruction relief & rehabilitation and disaster prevention & preparedness. However, since the total amount of funding by the U.S. is significantly higher compared with these two countries, the substantial outlay of the three countries towards reconstruction relief & rehabilitation and disaster prevention & preparedness is almost the same.



**Figure 2.** Source: Author, based on data generated from OECD.Stat.



**Figure 3.** Source: Author, based on data generated from the Financial Tracking Service

Different from OECD.Stat, the FTS focuses on financial data in the emergency response phase, but it enables us to see more detailed data (by sector, by recipient organizations, and by recipient/affected countries). In this paper, we specifically use the three most recent years (2015, 2016, and 2017) in the FTS. According to the database, India contributed the smallest financial assistance among the Quad (see Figure 3).

The FTS database has fifteen types of sectors ranging from agriculture to logistics.<sup>2</sup> By sector, we find a basic trend that the percentage of funding allocated to food security is relatively higher than other sectors, such as education and nutrition, in the case of the U.S., Japan, and Australia. In 2015, the percentage of funding disbursed to the health sector was higher in these three countries. The reason is that they allocated their budget to the Ebola crisis, which began in 2014. Compared with the U.S., Japan and Australia provided a higher percentage of financial support to the multi-sector category. According to an explanation of the FTS, the multi-sector category includes “projects and activities with no one dominant sector and often applies to the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) assistance for refugees.”<sup>3</sup> In the case of India, although the size of the financial support is smaller than the other three countries, we do not find that the Indian government had a preference for any specific sectors.

By recipient organizations, the U.S. and Japan have a higher percentage of financial support for the UNHCR, the United Nations World Food Programme

(WFP), and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF). Every year, they allocated more than 50% of the total amount of their funding to these three organizations. Australia also provides a higher proportion of financial support to the UNHCR and the WFP but does not invest as much in UNICEF. As opposed to the U.S. and Japan, it is notable that Australia disbursed a greater percentage of its funding allocation to the International Committee of Red Cross and the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF). CERF is a pooled funding source, which is managed by OCHA. India also contributes to CERF every year, giving 500,000 USD in 2017 (Japan gave 1.4 million USD, Australia 8.2 million USD, and the U.S. 5 million USD). But Japan contributes more to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) than the U.S, Australia, and India.

By recipient countries, there is similarity between the U.S., Japan, and Australia in that they provided financial assistance to Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Somalia, Sudan, and South Sudan. Japan, Australia, and India allocated a higher percentage of their total amount to the Rohingya issue. This does not mean that the U.S. has not supported the Rohingya issue, but it indicates that the percentage given to the Rohingya response is relatively lower than support for other countries. In reality, the FTS data as of December 10, 2018 demonstrate that the U.S. is the top donor country to the Rohingya response: 40.6% of the total budget in the Rohingya Refugee Crisis Joint Response Plan 2018 has been disbursed by the U.S. In 2016, Fiji was affected by Cyclone Winston. Australia and India provided higher percentages of funding to Fiji, although the U.S. and Japan recorded relatively lower percentages in each disbursement.

According to the FTS, the U.S. has been identified as the top donor country from 2015 to 2017, and that result is consistent with the data of OECD.Stat. Japan has been ranked fifth in these three years. Australia has not been ranked in the top ten, and India’s funding has been much smaller. Focusing on only disaster risk reduction, the Overseas Development Institute and the World Bank calculated the funding data for the past twenty years and published the result in 2013.<sup>4</sup> Even though the result is not the latest information, Japan was the top donor country. The U.S. was the second, and Australia was the third. Since the U.S., Japan, and Australia represented the greatest percentage in total financial support, cooperation between them can be significant. If these three countries were to reach consensus on policies, it would become difficult for other donors and recipients to ignore their combined financial power.

## Japan’s Policy on International Disaster Relief

In the field of HA/DR, the government of Japan basically conducts three types of assistance: (1) Emergency Grant Aid from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; (2) deployment of the Japan Disaster Relief Team and the provision of in-kind items by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA); and (3) activities



of the Ministry of Defense and the Self-Defense Forces. In principle, practical implementation by the Self-Defense Forces is considered an activity of the Japan Disaster Relief Team, which JICA manages. The Peacekeeping Operations of the United Nations are operated separately from the Japan Disaster Relief Team. However, in times outside of disasters, the armed forces carry out exercises and training, which are outside the scope of the Japan Disaster Relief Team. Details are described later, but in particular, the U.S., Japan, and Australia have been doing the exercises to train the countries in the Indo-Pacific region over many years.

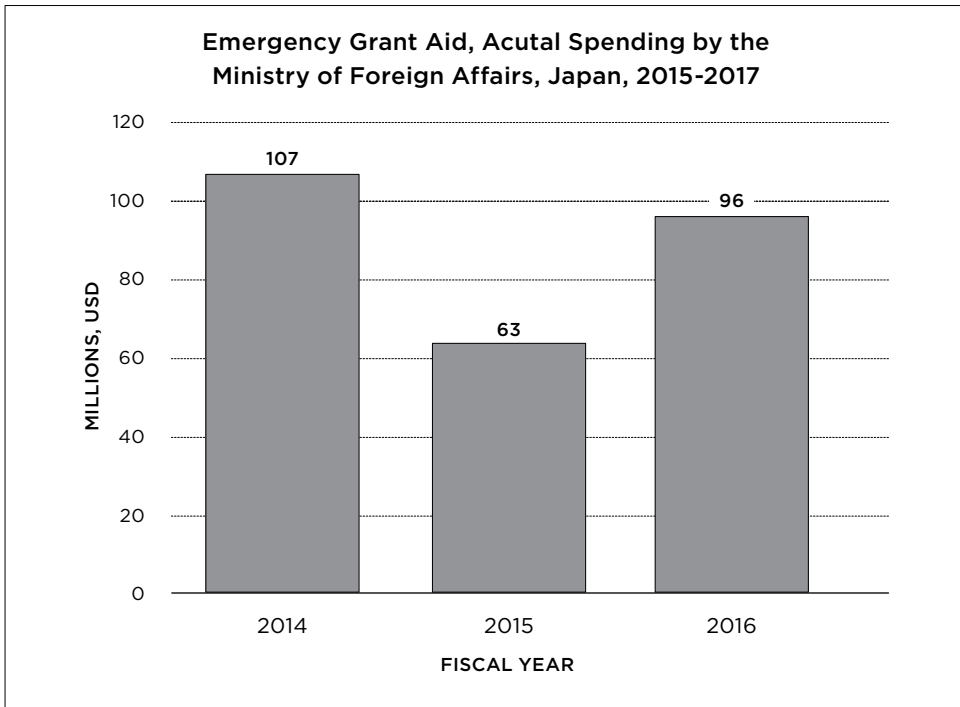
The latest policy for Japanese HA/DR implementation is stated in an official document titled “Humanitarian Aid Policy of Japan,” which was released in 2011 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. We can find two important concepts in that document. First, the government of Japan recognizes that HA/DR is comprehensive and encompasses the whole process of emergency response, recovery, reconstruction, and preparedness. The policy document notes that:

The Government of Japan considers humanitarian assistance as not only an emergency response measure but also to include rescue operations, recovery and reconstruction assistance as well as disaster risk reduction.<sup>5</sup>

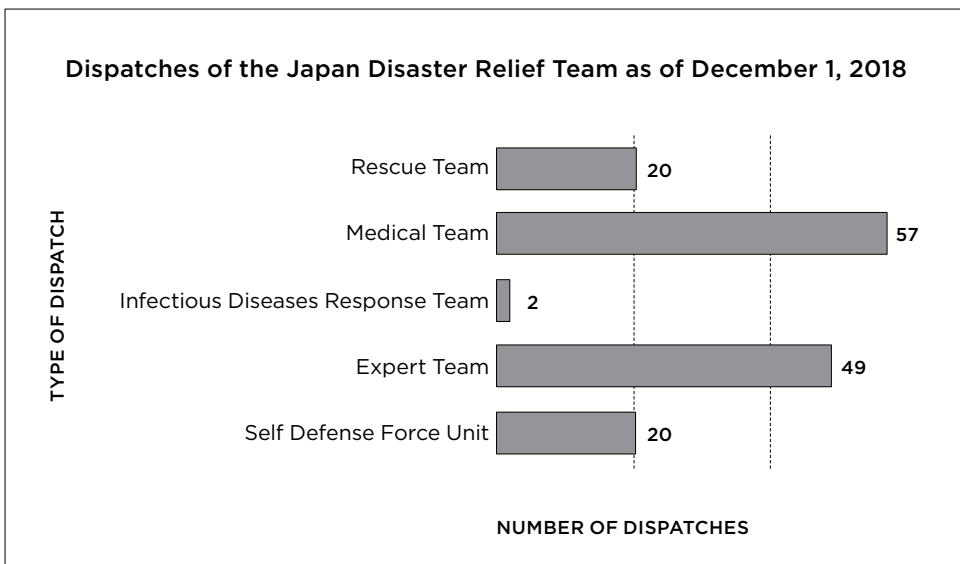
Second, the policy paper discusses the concept of “smooth transition.” Related to the notion that HA/DR includes all phases and activities for disasters, the Japanese government emphasizes the importance of “seamless” assistance, which covers emergency relief, recovery, reconstruction, and their connection to longer-term development. JICA’s *Issue-specific Guidelines for Disaster Reduction* describe three development strategy goals (see Table 1). The second goal can be interpreted as HA/DR in a narrow sense. The third goal uses the phrase “transition to,” which is evidence that JICA considers HA/DR inclusive of all stages of disasters.

JICA’s Issue-specific Guidelines for Disaster Prevention	
Development strategy GOAL 1	“Building disaster-resilient communities and societies” (Prevention: mitigation/preparedness)
Development strategy GOAL 2	Emergency response that reaches disaster victims quickly and effectively (Protection of life)
Development strategy GOAL 3	Transition to and implementation of adaptive recovery and reconstruction (Recovery/Reconstruction)

**Table 1.** Source: JICA, 2009.



**Figure 4.** Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, *White Papers on Development Cooperation 2015, 2016, and 2017*.<sup>6</sup>



**Figure 5.** Source: JICA, *International Emergency Assistance Activities*.<sup>7</sup>

Based on these policies and guidelines, we can understand the actual implementation. Figure 4 illustrates the actual spending of the Emergency Grant Aid. In the fiscal year of 2015, the spending was smaller than in 2014 and 2016. According to the detailed record of the actual aid spending, it is clear that the Japanese government did not select specific countries or cases. In the dispatch records of the Japan Disaster Relief Teams the Japanese government demonstrated no preferences, deploying the Medical Teams many times (see Figure 5). This can be interpreted that medical needs are generally greater for life-saving activities soon after disasters, rather than a general prioritization of medical service assistance by the Japanese government.

## Opportunities and Challenges

### Japan's national interest and Quad cooperation on HA/DR

Although we have a variety of definitions of the national interests of Japan, the Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy (FOIP) must be considered in the context of the Quad. Ideally, the FOIP is conducted through Quad cooperation. In April 2017, the International Cooperation Bureau of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan published the "Priority Policy for Development Cooperation." In this policy, the Bureau clearly stated that the FOIP is the key principle, and the government seeks to promote "cooperation in disaster and tsunami risk reduction" and "humanitarian assistance including assistance for refugees."<sup>8</sup> In other words, HA/DR can be considered one of the major elements in the FOIP. The promotion of HA/DR is connected to achievement of the FOIP.

The U.S., Japan, and Australia have already started joint activities in the field of HA/DR. These three countries released a "Trilateral Strategic Dialogue Joint Statement Annex; Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief in the Asia Pacific Region: Trilateral Cooperation" in June 2008. According to the statement, "the ministers directed relevant officials to develop guidelines to facilitate this trilateral cooperation and information-sharing on humanitarian assistance and disaster relief."<sup>9</sup> Contrarily, the governments of Japan and India made a "Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation between Japan and India" on October 22, 2008.<sup>10</sup> The Joint Declaration established an action plan to advance security cooperation, including HA/DR issues. An example of the collaboration between Japan and India is the participation as observers of staff from the Indian army in the U.S. and Japan joint HA/DR exercise in November 2017, after which the participants shared lessons on HA/DR.<sup>11</sup> The FOIP is considered the top priority in the Japanese foreign policy agenda. The FOIP implementation is planned to be achieved through Quad cooperation. HA/DR activities are included as sub-goals in the FOIP. Therefore, Quad cooperation in HA/DR would contribute to the FOIP and would be beneficial for Japanese national interests.

## Challenges to promoting Quad cooperation on HA/DR

Challenges can be found outside and inside of the Quad.

One external challenge facing the Quad is the need to consider the position of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Due to the region's geography, there have been many disasters in ASEAN countries, and HA/DR operations are likely to be carried out in ASEAN member states in the future. The U.S., Japan, and Australia have been collaborating with the ASEAN countries in HA/DR exercises and real operations.<sup>12</sup> Additionally, both ASEAN countries and the Quad participated in the ASEAN Regional Forum Disaster Relief Exercises.<sup>13</sup> Despite these efforts, we may face two negative reactions. First, ASEAN countries may distance themselves from the Quad if ASEAN recognizes that there is competition between the FOIP and the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative. If ASEAN has such a concern, cooperation with the Quad on HA/DR might become less active. Second, there is a possibility that ASEAN itself may seek to strengthen its own internal relationships. This may generate a situation in which ASEAN does not have a positive attitude towards cooperation with the Quad. ASEAN countries have been gradually organizing their own agreements for strengthening their collaboration in HA/DR. The ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response was ratified in 2005 and went into effect in 2009. The ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management was established in 2011. The ASEAN Declaration on "One ASEAN, One Response: ASEAN Responding to Disasters as One in the Region and Outside the Region" was launched in 2016.

Among the four countries of the Quad, we may have challenges too. First, there is a difference between exercises and real implementation of HA/DR. It is true that military organizations have conducted HA/DR exercises regularly, but aid organizations, such as the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), JICA, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia (formerly Australian AID, or AusAID, which was merged into that Ministry), separately carry out their programs. According to a report from the JICA Research Institute, the U.S., Japan, and Australia had their own assistance programs and projects and acted individually in the cases of the Philippines during Typhoon Haiyan and Timor Leste after its independence.<sup>14</sup> It is not surprising that coordination between donor agencies is difficult, and that tendency was observed in these three countries.

Second, the significant difference in the size of the funding may cause difficulties for aid coordination. As shown in Figure 1 and Figure 3, the funding from the U.S. is much larger than that of the other members of the Quad. When the rest of the funding provided by Japan, Australia, and India is added up, the sum is still far smaller than that of the U.S. In such a situation, if the U.S. goes its own way, it is hard for the rest of three countries to ask the U.S. to return to the group coordination.

Third, the Japan-Australia-India-U.S. consultations have not yet explicitly included HA/DR as an agenda item. According to a press release from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, the main agenda of the consultations has been focused

on national security issues, as well as discussions of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).<sup>15</sup> The coverage of the SDGs is very wide, and it can be said that HA/DR is included in them. However, we may assume that HA/DR is not an urgent topic for the Quad because they have not yet officially and specifically emphasized the significance of HA/DR by using that term.

Fourth, taking into consideration the traditional diplomatic approach of India, it is not easy to imagine that India will soon start extensive collaboration on national security beyond merely maintaining friendships with the U.S., Japan, and Australia. As noted earlier, the trilateral relationship has been reinforced over many years. The accumulation of the collaborative works is totally different between India and the rest of the three (trilateral) countries.

## Policy Recommendations for Japan

The relationship and context with ASEAN and India have implications for Japan to explore in these recommendations.

For ASEAN, Japan should proactively engage in ASEAN events, in addition to utilizing the ASEAN Regional Framework. For example, opportunities to participate in the biannual ASEAN Regional Disaster Emergency Response Simulation Exercise (ARDEX) can be useful. The latest ARDEX was conducted in November 2018, and while Japan and Australia also received the official invitation letters from the ASEAN Secretariat, only the U.S. accepted the offer to participate. If a closer relationship with ASEAN is necessary, these important efforts must not be ignored.

Regarding India, the Japan-India Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue has been held since 2007. The tenth Dialogue finished in January 2019. A review of the press releases from each Dialogue shows that the Dialogues have never clearly mentioned cooperation in the field of HA/DR.<sup>16</sup> Japan has only one diplomatic document (the "Action Plan to advance Security Cooperation based on the Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation between Japan and India"<sup>17</sup>) that explicitly refers to HA/DR cooperation. The defense authorities made progress such as when staff of the Indian army joined the U.S. and Japan joint HA/DR exercise as observers, as described earlier. However, the diplomatic authorities have not yet mentioned anything about HA/DR at the minister level. At the Japan-India Act East Forum, the Japanese delegation suggested cooperation with India in the field of disaster risk reduction. If the government of Japan increases opportunities for working-level consultations and continues to refer to HA/DR issues as a discussion item, it might be possible for the HA/DR agenda to be debated at the minister level, and then specific cooperation activities can begin.<sup>18</sup>

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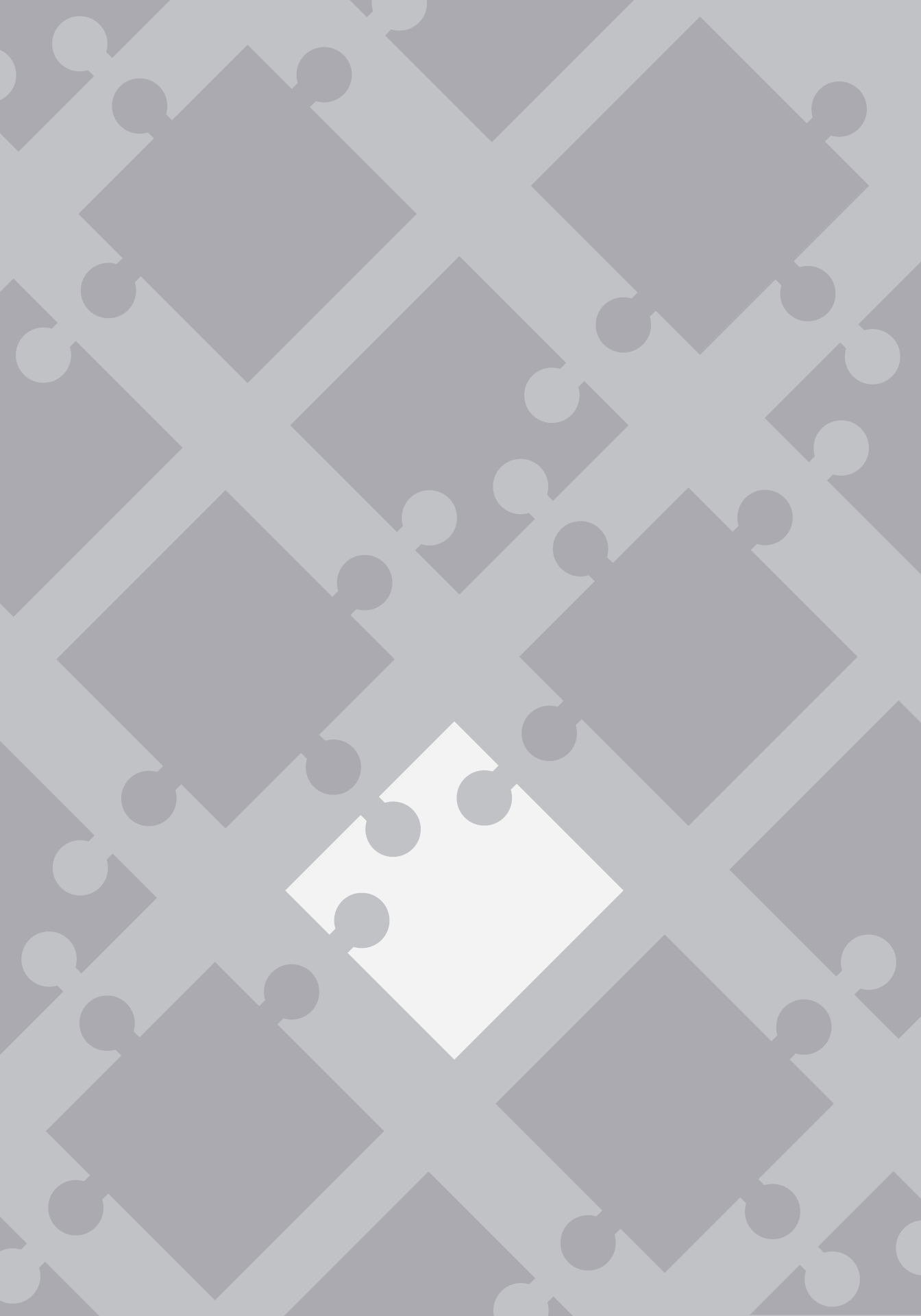
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# The U.S. and Quad Disaster Cooperation: A Matter of Political Will

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The experience of the United States with large-scale disasters extends beyond its borders: the U.S. has long played an important role in international disaster response at the request of disaster-struck nations. Historian Julia Irwin notes that before World War II Congress made occasional grants, such as to Italy after the 1908 Messina earthquake, and more frequently committed aid supplies and services, such as to Japan after the Great Kantō earthquake in 1923; after the war, the government formalized its foreign disaster assistance.<sup>1</sup> Since then, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR) has become a function of American power projection, national defense, conflict deterrence, and even climate change response.<sup>2</sup> Several recent examples demonstrate the scale and variety of the U.S.'s response capabilities. Following the 2011 earthquake, tsunami, and subsequent nuclear disaster in Japan, the U.S. military forces based in Japan responded swiftly with Operation Tomodachi, providing support in the form of logistics, personnel, and supplies, in addition to coordination with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).<sup>3</sup> In the year after Typhoon Haiyan hit the Philippines in 2013, the U.S. government provided more than 90 million USD in humanitarian funding and assisted with recovery projects ranging from shelter to food and water.<sup>4</sup> After the 2015 earthquake in Nepal, the U.S. government contributed approximately 130 million USD for relief and recovery, sent more than 1,100 first responders to assist in the aftermath, and supported long-term recovery projects.<sup>5</sup> The U.S. responses were part of the broad support of the international community.

Climate-related natural disasters also occur with regularity in the United States and impact hundreds of thousands of people each year, testing the ability of Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to respond. In the latter half of 2018 alone, Hurricane Florence caused extensive damage in the Carolinas, while California suffered from the worst wildfire season on record. Though FEMA has made significant improvements in its response methods and civil-military coordination since Hurricane Katrina in 2005, largescale disasters will continue to occur and exact a large toll in terms of damage, financial impact, and efforts to respond and rebuild.

As more frequent and larger disasters continue to strain the response practices and systems in place, however, it is worth asking if countries should explore deeper cooperation ahead of disasters. The U.S.'s capacity for contributing to multilateral disaster cooperation is significant and has precedence. The collaborative response of the U.S., India, Japan, and Australia to the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami — which

first gave rise to the concept of the Quad, or the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue — is a prime, if now old, example that might be used for future cooperation. The U.S.'s long interest in the Quad is promising as a foundation for that cooperation, but only if the U.S. government has the political will to build such a proposal. With foreign assistance given short shrift under the Trump administration, the U.S. is not currently well-positioned to support Quad-style disaster cooperation. But the benefits of a commitment to prepare for and face disasters together are worth pursuing in the future.

## U.S. Policy on International Disaster Relief

The United States has responded to international disasters by providing humanitarian assistance as a function of the government since the end of World War II, when a spate of legislation established offices for disaster relief, including predecessors of USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA).<sup>6</sup> After a string of major disasters in the early 2000s — such as the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, Hurricane Katrina in 2005, and the earthquake in Pakistan the same year — humanitarian assistance has been a core component of U.S. national security strategy, discussed as a standalone topic and in conjunction with military strategy in various documents including the National Security Strategy (NSS), Quadrennial Defense Review (now replaced by the National Defense Strategy), and Cooperative Strategy for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Seapower.<sup>7</sup>

American contributions to international disasters today are made by OFDA, within the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance. OFDA responds to an average of 65 disasters per year in more than 50 countries; in 2017, for example, OFDA assisted with 53 disasters in 49 countries.<sup>8</sup>

OFDA's assistance comes at the request of the chief of mission for U.S. diplomatic missions or from the regional Assistant Secretary of State if there is no official delegation in a country. If the chief of mission decides a disaster satisfies the criteria for assistance (the magnitude of the disaster, requests for or willingness to accept U.S. assistance, and whether assistance is in U.S. interests), a disaster declaration cable to OFDA begins the process of transferring funds, personnel, supplies, or other types of aid.<sup>9</sup> After a series of large disasters in the early 2000s, the State Department and USAID reassessed the cumbersome process of coordinating an interagency response to disasters, resulting in closer relationships between the departments and formal and informal processes to handle disasters of different magnitudes.<sup>10</sup> The whole-of-government approach under OFDA's leadership involves 30 partnerships supported by memoranda of understanding and interagency agreements, which OFDA supports through regular training in departments, agencies, and the military across the government, in the U.S. and abroad. In 2017, for example, OFDA hosted two international disaster response simulations for senior staff in the interagency.<sup>11</sup> OFDA coordinates disaster responses by directing assistance from other areas of the government, such as the Department of Defense, through an interagency

standing committee in the Operations Center of the Executive Secretariat of the State Department, to which other departmental joint task forces report.<sup>12</sup> OFDA's on-the-ground presence at a disaster is a Disaster Assistance Response Team, which is paired with a Washington-based Response Management Team to communicate needs and manage logistics.<sup>13</sup>

If the civilian response is not sufficient, OFDA can work with the Department of Defense to request military assets — often lift capabilities — through a formal request, though disaster-local U.S. embassy staff have in the past sometimes circumvented the process due to a lack of awareness. Partnership with the U.S. military — during disasters as well as in other development efforts — has been coordinated by the Office of Civil-Military Cooperation since 2011, with USAID personnel embedded in the five Combatant Commands to better assess how the military's assets can provide development assistance. Following humanitarian best practices laid out in the 1994 Oslo Guidelines<sup>14</sup> for the use of military and civil defense assets after disasters, OFDA draws upon military assistance only when necessary, such as transporting relief materials to hazardous locations.<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless, the military is often part of the U.S.'s initial response to an international disaster, primarily due to the necessity of timeliness in the disaster response. Bases worldwide allow the military's personnel and supplies to reach disaster-struck areas quickly, sometimes within hours, as was the case with the 2011 Japanese triple disaster.<sup>16</sup> Political factors, such as public pressure to respond to a disaster or the chance to deepen relationships with partners and burnish a positive international image, are present in but do not seem to drive the U.S.'s response decisions.<sup>17</sup>

OFDA also acts as a coordinator for American non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and private companies offering cash, supplies, or other implementation assistance by assessing the offered aid against the requirements of the relief efforts.

Complicating the provision of aid is the underestimation of the cost of U.S. international HA/DR activities, resulting in insufficient budgets later supplemented by additional appropriations. HA/DR funding is appropriated to four accounts housed by the Department of State and USAID: International Disaster Assistance (IDA), Migration and Refugee Assistance (MRA), Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance (ERMA), and P.L. 480 Title II, which funds the Food for Peace (FFP) program. Separately from these accounts, the defense budget funds the U.S. military's annual HA/DR activities (both domestic and international) under "Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster Assistance, and Civic Aid" (107.7 million USD in the FY2019 budget), with the option for supplemental natural disaster response funding.<sup>18</sup>

Funding requests for the four main HA/DR accounts have been consistently lower than actual spending in the previous fiscal year. In the past, Congress has approved requested levels of funding and permitted supplementary funding as needed.<sup>19</sup> In FY2018, the funding request was 5.3 billion USD, 44 percent lower than FY2017's actual expenses.<sup>20</sup> In addition to a reduction in IDA and MRA compared

to actual spending the previous years, the request also sought to eliminate ERMA and FFP.<sup>21</sup> Congress did not approve the proposed changes, and the FY2019 budget that was passed in February 2019 increased HA/DR funding by about 3 billion USD over the administration's 6.4 billion USD request.<sup>22</sup>

The Trump administration funding request also stated that the U.S. government would “urge other donors [...] to increase funding for humanitarian assistance and lessen the burden on the United States to respond,” repeating a sentiment also found in the administration's first budget request.<sup>23</sup> The implication that the U.S., among other donors, is over-burdened by foreign assistance activities (including development aid and other non-disaster spending) is misleading since, while the U.S. spends the most in terms of dollars, it ranks low compared to other developed countries in terms of spending as a percent of gross domestic product: 0.18 percent. This level of contribution is well below the United Nation's target of 0.7 percent.<sup>24</sup> In the context of this underspending, the Trump administration's attempts to further reduce HA/DR funding — and foreign assistance in general — are concerning, given the miniscule savings for the U.S. government's budget and the massive impact such cuts would have on millions of people around the world. Without sufficient funding for these activities, the U.S.'s image abroad and its national security could be damaged. Indeed, the support of Congress for a larger HA/DR budget is founded on the national security and prestige benefits of HA/DR for the U.S.: as HA/DR activities are an investment in stability abroad, responses to crises and disasters as well as preventive measures are easy for members of both major political parties to support. The relatively small amount spent is effective and generates goodwill in the international community towards the U.S.

## Opportunities and Challenges

### U.S. Interest in Quad Cooperation

The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, or the Quad, was an informal arrangement between Australia, India, Japan, and the U.S. in 2007, including a diplomatic dialogue on the sidelines of the ASEAN Regional Forum in May and participation of all four countries (plus Singapore) in the second Malabar naval exercise in September of that year, which Australia had not previously joined. The U.S. supported the development of the meeting, which grew from Japanese Prime Minister Shinzō Abe's idea for a four-way dialogue, with reports in 2007 stating that U.S. Vice President Richard Cheney had endorsed the concept during a tour of the region.<sup>25</sup> Since the withdrawal of Australia in 2008, the Quad has not held exercises, though India, Japan, and the U.S. have continued Malabar. However, following the Indo-Pacific focused “consultation” that the four countries held on the sidelines of the ASEAN summit in November 2017, Quad cooperation may once again be on the table. There have been two additional meetings since then, in June and November 2018.<sup>26</sup>

The only case of Quad cooperation in a disaster was, in fact, the Quad's antecedent: the coordinated response of the U.S. with Australia, India, and Japan to the 2004 earthquake and tsunami in the Indian Ocean, named the Tsunami Core Group. This effort was hailed by the Bush administration as an important foundation for international cooperation following the disaster,<sup>27</sup> and the under secretary of state for political affairs, Mark Grossman, who was the U.S.'s primary point of contact, argued that it showcased the benefits of ad hoc international cooperation.<sup>28</sup> But it also revealed the shortcomings of existing mechanisms to handle a disaster of that magnitude. International agencies and affected nations were overwhelmed by the outpouring of responses, to which ASEAN and the U.S. responded by helping to coordinate offers and determine requirements. The diversity of responses and of regional capabilities also laid bare the need for better disaster preparation, prevention, and detection.<sup>29</sup>

While the Quad has had little opportunity to demonstrate its capabilities for disaster cooperation, in theory there is much to be gained from this arrangement. Today, the four nations seem hesitant to establish a formal security arrangement, pointedly eschewing the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue label and not issuing a joint statement after the third meeting of the new Quad iteration in November 2018.<sup>30</sup> This new formulation is possibly an attempt to avoid further antagonizing China, which reacted negatively to the original Quad meeting and has also criticized the later meetings though they are not officially labeled "Quad."<sup>31</sup> Attempts to avoid provoking China are particularly salient given the rocky status of U.S.-China relations since the trade war began in March 2018.<sup>32</sup>

Nevertheless, the diplomatic arm of the U.S. government views the current iteration of the Quad favorably as a way to deepen cooperation with the other three countries. After the November 2018 meeting, the Department of State's press release stated there would be "regular consultations on Indo-Pacific engagement and initiatives," covering diverse topics from regional security to economic development, and centering ASEAN and other institutions in the regional architecture.<sup>33</sup> The positive outlook from the U.S.'s statement reflects the U.S.'s interests — in protecting regional security, strengthening partnerships, and maintaining an active role in the international community — that would be served by pursuing Quad cooperation.

Quad cooperation in general would be an opportunity for the U.S. to work with other major Indo-Pacific democracies to provide stability in the region, forming solidarity in the face of regional challenges that include natural disasters. This would also help American funding for disaster management have a larger impact by combining American resources and expertise with those of partners. Without continuing efforts to pool resources and build more resilient societies, disasters will continue to cause catastrophic economic and social losses, year after year, in a region recognized by the 2018 NSS as key for the U.S.'s national security interests.<sup>34</sup> If the Quad can be used to provide an effective means of international cooperation to insulate the region from the effects of disasters, then it is in the U.S.'s interest to pursue that partnership. Further, if that cooperation focuses specifically on disaster

management and prevention, it will be less likely to increase U.S.-China tensions. Beijing, which has before voiced opposition to potential containment by the Quad members, may not believe a stated goal of humanitarianism, but a Quad that is narrowly focused on HA/DR in both dialogues and actions may assuage concerns.

The Quad also represents a trust-building exercise for the U.S. and its international partners. A disaster management-focused Quad would require a strong commitment leading to significant investment in group preparation as well as regular and public tests of its capabilities, given the frequency of disasters. Exercises and implementation would build confidence and trust between the U.S. and the other Quad nations by demonstrating that the U.S. is committed to each of its partners and to international cooperation.

The U.S. must also consider ramifications of opting out of potential cooperative arrangements. The 2004 tsunami showed the U.S. that the speed and sincerity of the U.S.'s response to a disaster are directly tied to American prestige and leadership abroad. In the case of the tsunami, while the Departments of State and Defense responded immediately, the Bush administration did not offer a strong political statement of support for several days after the tsunami, initially pledging only 15 million USD for relief. As the magnitude of the disaster became apparent, the Bush administration increased the U.S. government pledge to 950 million USD, but the early damage was done, with international organizations criticizing the U.S. for stinginess. The impression given, however inadvertently and incorrectly, was that American values were hollow and the U.S. was not a reliable leader and partner in the international community.<sup>35</sup> Whether a lesson was learned from the tsunami may depend, to some extent, on the administration in power. For example, the Obama administration reacted swiftly after the earthquake that struck Haiti in 2010, mobilizing significant military and aid resources.<sup>36</sup> But the response of the Trump administration to various disasters, such as the aftermath of Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico in 2017 and the California wildfires in 2018, has been at times inadequate.<sup>37</sup> A careless statement in response to a large international disaster could damage the perception of the U.S. abroad, which could in turn inhibit the U.S.'s ability to project power.

## Challenges for Quad Cooperation

Quad cooperation in disaster management and prevention will face several challenges, ranging from its structure and funding to the scope of implementation, that could make the U.S. hesitant to participate. Given the Trump administration's attempts to reduce U.S. foreign assistance across the board — not to mention the regularity of disasters and the importance of host country consultation in the disaster management process — ad hoc disaster cooperation between the Quad nations is not a realistic way to guarantee U.S. participation in a Quad activity, despite the Trump administration's support for quadrilateral meetings. However, a formal Quad-based mechanism would require a way for disaster-hit countries to easily use it, perhaps by offering a menu of the U.S.'s and the other three countries' capabilities, capacities, assets, personnel,

or funding that could be utilized based on a country's needs in a disaster and its proximity to the Quad nations. The political sensitivities of the nations that the Quad assists must also be considered in the mechanism's flexibility, allowing members to opt out if requested without disintegrating the Quad structure.

Another option that might be easier to implement is for the Quad nations to work within existing disaster management mechanisms, such as the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre), with which the U.S. has partnered on various projects. This method would take advantage of systems that are already equipped to distribute assistance during disasters. The AHA Centre is a particularly good candidate for some form of Quad cooperation because it already counts each of the four nations as a Dialogue Partner, defined as a supporting nation or international organization that provides funding, assets, and expertise to support AHA.<sup>38</sup> The U.S. has already worked with AHA on several projects: the Pacific Disaster Center, which is housed at the University of Hawaii under an agreement with the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, worked closely with AHA to establish the Disaster Monitoring & Response System that AHA uses;<sup>39</sup> the PROGRESS project with USAID works on capacity building; and the U.S. Forest Service has collaborated with ASEAN to adapt the Incident Command System for emergency response.<sup>40</sup> This history of collaboration gives the U.S. incentive to continue working with AHA, and it also provides a starting point for discussion on Quad cooperation on existing projects ranging from prevention and mitigation to response and recovery, building on a foundation of bilateral arrangements.

However, lack of political commitment poses a second challenge to Quad cooperation in disaster management and prevention. If the Quad nations do not convince each other of their political commitment and provide steady funding, efforts to establish a cooperation mechanism will likely stall.<sup>41</sup> For this reason, Quad cooperation during the Trump administration seems unlikely. A future administration that returns to a policy of prioritizing the U.S.'s partnerships and alliances might provide a more stable foundation — and possibly an endowment — for cooperation. However, any American administration needs to also be confident in its Quad partners for the cooperation to succeed. Australia's exit from the original Quad in 2008 will make the U.S. (and likewise the other Quad members) eager to gain firm commitments from the other three nations if a formal Quad relationship is proposed, a classic collective action problem. Otherwise, the U.S. will probably be hesitant to move beyond the informal meetings underway.

A third challenge is present in whether the Quad nations will help each other in addition to fifth-party nations. The U.S. has turned down some offers of assistance during major disasters in the past, in part due to an inefficient process for assessing offers as well as some mismatch between offers and post-disaster needs.<sup>42</sup> Generally the U.S. handles its own disasters through FEMA, the U.S. military, and a constellation of NGOs. The U.S.'s history of refusals and delayed responses may change if larger, more frequent disasters occur that strain its domestic disaster budget. But partnership on disaster prevention and mitigation activities may be

more acceptable for the U.S., at least, than accepting Quad assistance in fraught conditions during domestic disasters. Since the time and place of preventive projects can be chosen, the U.S. government has greater freedom to develop these activities with partners and accept foreign expertise. Such pre-disaster resilience building activities are also valuable opportunities to practice cooperation and could figure prominently in the Quad.

## Policy Recommendations for the U.S.

Quad cooperation is a worthy pursuit in the face of the increasing scale and frequency of disasters, and there is much the U.S. can do to encourage and lead this cooperation.

**1. Increase the budget for humanitarian assistance.** The administration should take a positive view of the U.S.'s contributions to foreign aid, understanding that the U.S.'s aid activities and donations make an enormous impact on the lives of millions of people as well as the U.S.'s own national security interests. The administration should draft budgets that allocate more funds to USAID, rather than proposing to reduce funds. Additional funds should be dedicated to disaster prevention, mitigation, and other activities that help societies become more resilient. The administration should also provide funding to USAID specifically for an endowment to fund Quad cooperation in whatever form it may take, whether through assistance to an existing regional mechanism or through a new, formal Quad partnership.

**2. Convene a Quad dialogue to explore the most effective format of Quad cooperation on disaster management and establish goals of cooperation.** Rather than focusing on ad hoc cooperation, Quad dialogues should explore various configurations for disaster cooperation and determine what form cooperation will take. The U.S. should take the lead by calling on the Quad nations' lead agencies for disaster response, government representatives, and experts to join this dialogue. The dialogue should examine ways in which cooperation can be triggered, such as by request of nations experiencing disasters, and ways in which cooperation can become an ongoing activity, such as through integration with existing disaster management organizations or through a formal Quad arrangement. The dialogue should also interrogate the extent to which each nation wants to participate in cooperation before and after disasters, on domestic and foreign soil. The dialogue should seek to conclude with a joint statement on common goals for disaster cooperation.

**3. Discuss the desirability and feasibility of Quad cooperation with existing multinational mechanisms for disaster relief.** To better explore whether integration with an existing disaster management organization or mechanism is the best option for cooperation, the U.S. should consult representatives from international disaster management organizations. The U.S., in partnership with the other Quad nations' lead agencies for disaster response, should assess the processes in place within these organizations and past collaboration with them to determine potential starting points for the Quad to respond to disasters within the organizations' frameworks.



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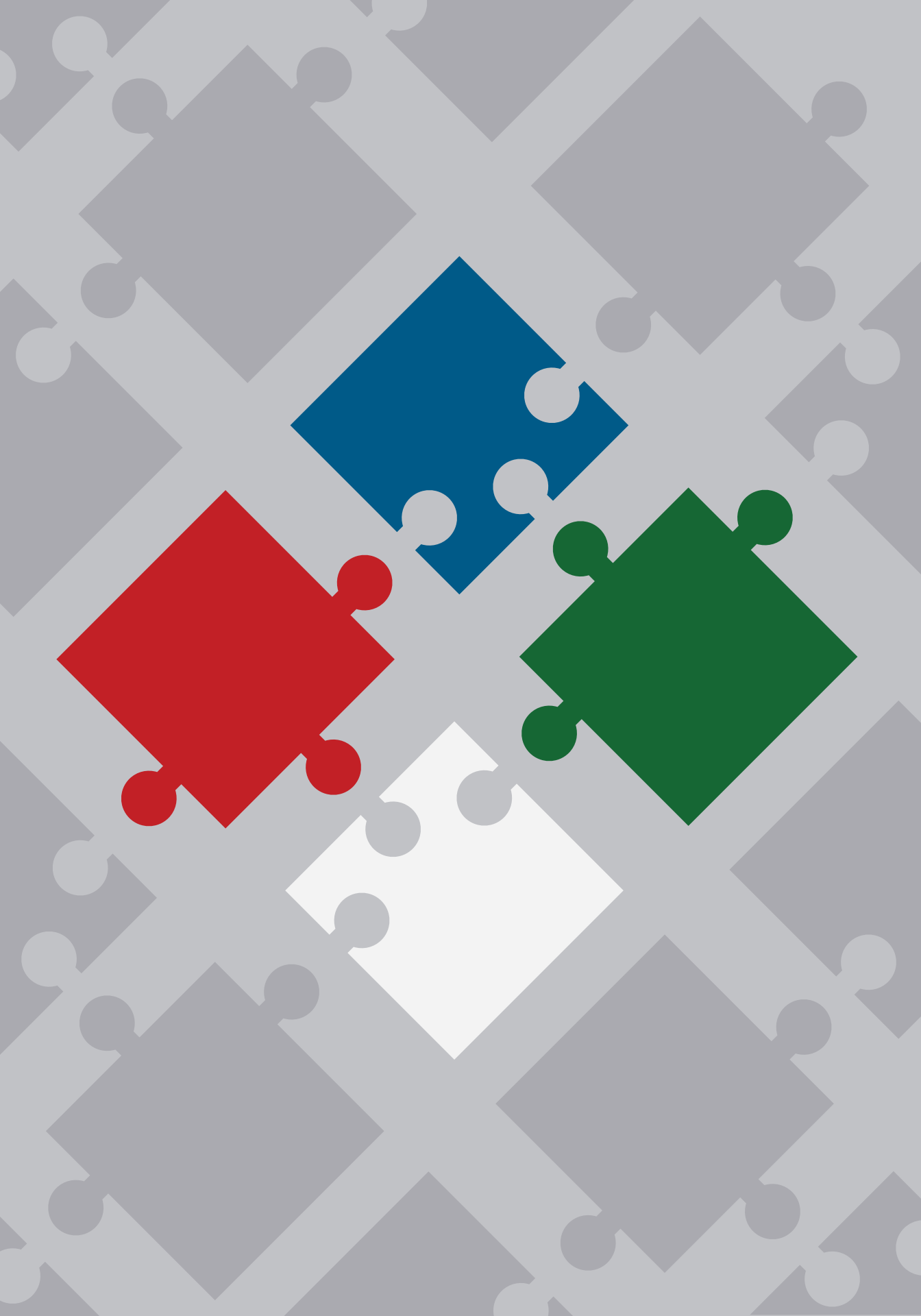
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## International Disaster Response: Rebuilding the Quad?



## Final Thoughts

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*Yuki Tatsumi and Jason Li*

The preceding chapters of this volume examined the perspective of each Quad country — Australia, India, Japan and the United States — on the prospects and challenges of pursuing further cooperation in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR) and other efforts to assist countries in the Indo-Pacific region in enhancing their resilience toward large-scale disasters. While each country has been driven by various factors, there are a couple concerns that seem to be shared among them.

First is the sense that, while diversity of capability can be a strength as it can lead to greater complementarity, each country's administrative procedures may hinder deeper cooperation. On the one hand, diversity of resources, information, data, and expertise increases the benefits of cooperation in disaster responses. For example, Stevenson and Envall argue in their paper on the Australian perspective that each country's comparative advantage could be shared across the Quad, while Kennedy essentially makes the same point when she suggests "combining American resources and expertise with those of partners" to help prevent the huge economic and social costs of disasters. Disaster response is an area that has an outsized growth potential in information-sharing, resource-sharing, and burden-sharing, and the Quad can work to fill this gap. On the other hand, however, to pursue greater complementarity among the Quad countries, firmly established patterns of behavior and procedures in each country's relevant agencies may pose a key challenge to maximizing the potential benefits of cooperation.

Second, how to position Quad cooperation in relation to China remains a challenge. Indeed, Stevenson and Envall warn that too close an association of Quad cooperation as a framework to contain China could backfire, even handicapping efforts to expand Quad cooperation in disaster response. An HA/DR-focused Quad may be a less-threatening forum for quadrilateral cooperation between these like-minded partners given the inoffensive nature of HA/DR initiatives like equipping cities and local governments to mitigate the risks of disasters. Expanding on the benefits of an HA/DR Quad, Kennedy suggests that focusing Quad cooperation explicitly on disaster management and prevention will be less likely to increase U.S.-China tensions. At the same time, however, one might argue that, while Quad countries would want to proceed carefully so as to not alarm China, they should not let China's reactions determine the future of Quad cooperation.

Furthermore, India's position in the world as a country that prides itself on pursuing multi-alignment diplomacy and partnerships that are not held hostage to other states' strategic agendas sets it apart from Australia, Japan, and the United States. Stevenson and Envall's paper points out that India's persistent refusal to

allow Australia to observe or participate in the Malabar exercises further sidelines India. In addition, Jibiki's paper refers to the fact that India contributes the least to HA/DR funding. All these factors may contribute to the perception of India as the "weakest link" in the Quad, as Vasudeva suggests.

The fact that the Quad arguably lacks unity as a four-member group could also diminish the possibility of HA/DR cooperation. The very diversity that holds the potential for the Quad to evolve its complementarity also makes cooperation among them difficult. For instance, Stevenson and Envall's paper points out that Australia's HA/DR operations have historically been primarily non-military and bilateral in nature, which may make it hard to transition into quadrilateral cooperation across the civilian *and* military realms. Vasudeva also explains that India's HA/DR approach has focused heavily on its naval capabilities, but these activities have been poorly funded, potentially posing problems if India wants to increase its contribution to Quad disaster response. Jibiki's paper suggests that, despite the consultation and coordination among Quad militaries, aid organizations in each country have separately carried out their respective programs with different assistance priorities.

Whether Quad countries can expand their cooperation beyond HA/DR in a meaningful way remains a big question. To answer this question each of the Quad countries must realize that, while their militaries present the most tangible aspect of cooperation, overemphasizing security may not be helpful in facilitating further partnership. If the complementarity among the four countries is the biggest asset of the Quad, it cannot be maximized if security cooperation continues to be the top priority. If each of the Quad countries is serious about nurturing this group to play a stabilizing role in the Indo-Pacific, the four governments ought to discuss expanding the consultation scope beyond foreign and defense ministries, so that such collaboration can be implemented as a whole-of-government endeavor. With these changes in scope and approach, the Quad could reemerge as an impactful forum for international cooperation to help the Indo-Pacific face disasters in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.



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## About Views from the Next Generation

*Views from the Next Generation* is a series of policy papers by emerging experts on the most pressing security challenges facing Japan and the Indo-Pacific region. Published annually since 2014 by the Stimson Center's Japan Program with support from Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the series raises awareness in the U.S. of issues ranging from peacekeeping to nuclear weapons — all from the perspective of the next generation of scholars and researchers — through public seminars and free distribution of the report. With each group of authors who visit Washington, D.C. for the report launch, ties between the American and Japanese security policy communities deepen.

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## INTERNATIONAL DISASTER RESPONSE

# Rebuilding the Quad?

In 2004, Australia, India, Japan, and the U.S. worked together to respond to the devastating Indian Ocean tsunami. In 2007, these four countries formed the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue — the Quad — seeking to deepen their cooperation, only to disband after a year. The Quad nations met again for consultations in 2017 and 2018, but the purpose of these meetings remains vague. This latest volume of the Views from the Next Generation series asks a compelling question: Could the Quad become a new platform for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief?

With disasters occurring frequently in the Asia-Pacific region, the Quad's own neighborhood, each country has experience and capabilities to leverage in humanitarian cooperation. Yet the Quad also faces many challenges, from its previous emphasis on security issues to each country's level of commitment to such a forum. In this new collection of policy briefs, emerging experts from each of the Quad nations examine the potential benefits of and obstacles to rebuilding the Quad to focus on disaster response.

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