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Personal Objective

I am a researcher, writer, practitioner and social scientist with a strong practical field-based and research background in natural disaster risk management and development. I have lived and worked extensively throughout Asia-Pacific over the past 5 years. I have a desire to explore societal issues hindering people from achieving their well-being. I want to better understand the delicate balance between people and their natural environments. I believe everyone leads extraordinary lives, and would like to learn about people and their relationships with place, space, and society.

Current Research

- **Indian Ocean Tsunami** – Coastal communities, livelihood resilience and the informal tourism sector. (Involving qualitative field research)
- **Hurricane Katrina** – Livelihood Resilience and the Informal sector, Residents and Recovery in New Orleans.
- **Solomon Islands** – Investigating the role of the Chinese traders in the local economic recovery of the Solomon Islands

Projects

Primer for Disaster Risk Management in Asia – Volume 1

Aug 2003 – May 2005

Funded by USAID/OFDA

Implemented by Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) – Bangkok

Project Description: The Primer is intended to be a reference and resource guide on natural disaster risk management specific to the Asian region. It provides a brief introduction to concepts on topics such as policy, structural and non-structural mitigation, community based risk management strategies, knowledge development and project design. There is a 'how-to' process described in each chapter to guide key stakeholders in decision-making and implementation of risk reduction activities.

Key Role: I managed the conceptualisation, design, structure, research and content writing of this publication over 1.5 years. I organised a series of meetings with an advisory panel to decide on the key concepts to advocate and processes to drive. I conducted both field and desk based research with key stakeholders to determine good practices of coping measures to deal with risk. I coordinated 2 key writers and also wrote a few chapters on community based disaster risk management. I initiated a review process of the work, which is now undergoing final editing for publication.

Primer for Integrated Flood Risk Management in Asia – Volume 2

Oct 2004 – May 2005

Funded by United Nations Development Program

Implemented by Asian Disaster Preparedness Center – Bangkok

Project Description: As above. However, this second volume is hazard specific, dealing with slow-onset riverine flooding and the specific policy decisions, mitigation measures and emergency operations that must take place to deal with the risks presented by the flood environment. This publication is currently under UNDP review for publication later this year.

Key Role: Management of publication as above, however I was also both the primary researcher and co-author of this publication.

Assistant Trainer and Evaluator for Community Based Disaster Risk Management Pilot Course February 2004

Client: South Pacific Geo-Science Commission (SOPAC)

Project Description: Develop a Community Based Disaster Risk Management Course for the Pacific with experts from government and NGO sectors. Test whether the process, tools and techniques can be used in the Pacific with positive risk reduction results.

Key Role: Assist to develop curriculum for a Community Based Disaster Risk Management Pilot Course in the Pacific. Assist to deliver the course, including theoretical information sessions, case studies and practical field work. Facilitate use and testing of participatory tools in a village setting involving village representatives. Develop course evaluation and feedback to facilitators and course administrators.

External Evaluator for Remote Areas Disaster Prevention Program May-June 2004

Client: CARE International in Lao PDR

Project Description: To evaluate the outcome of a 12 month project targeting a selected number of villages in Xaiyaboury Province in Lao PDR. The objectives of the project were to decrease susceptibility of the people to drought, increase their livelihood security and ensure that interventions were sustainable.

Key Role: Devise a participatory evaluation methodology. Evaluate the project with key national disaster management officers and provincial officers, using community based disaster risk management tools and techniques to present a 'before' and 'after' scenario. Present key findings and recommendations to be inputted into Phase-2 based on the needs of the villages. Compile findings and write an independent report within 14 days of the site visit.

Case Study Research and Documentation

Project: Asian Urban Disaster Mitigation Program

Organisation: Asian Disaster Preparedness Center – Bangkok

Key Tasks: Organise meetings, key informant interviews and focus group meetings with key stakeholders at various project sites to research and document case studies highlighting the design and implementation process, key outcomes, and changes in the community. Compile data and write case studies in Bangladesh and Southern Thailand.

Work History

RMIT University – Centre for Risk and Community Safety

Period: August 2005 to date

Position: Research Officer

Australian Youth Ambassador for Development (AYAD)

Period: Sept 2004 – May 2005

Host Organisation: ADPC

Position: Research Co-ordinator

Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC)

Period: Aug 2003- Aug 2004

Position: Research Co-ordinator

SOPAC/ADPC

Period: February 2005

Position: Assistant course development

Assist in development of CBDRM process in the Pacific.

CARE International in Lao PDR

Period: May-June 2004

Position: Short-Term consultant

Project Evaluation

AZEECON – Lutheran World Foundation Bangladesh

Period: June – Oct 2004

Position: *Short-term consultant*

Training workshop co-ordinator and facilitator for Risk Management Course

University of Melbourne

Period: March 2002 - June 2003

Demonstrator/Tutor for 1st and 2nd year undergraduate subjects:

- Famine in the Modern World
- Sustainable Development
- Development in the Third World

Curtain Consulting

Period: throughout 2003

Research literature searches, collating and analysing data.

Qualifications

University of Melbourne

2003

Minor Thesis

Masters of Development Studies

ICT 4 Development

Monash University

1999

Minor Thesis

Bachelor of Arts (Hons – Geography)

Evolution of Japanese Official Development Assistance

Workshops and Courses

SOPAC and ADPC

2005

Community Based Disaster Risk Management Pilot Course, Nadi, Fiji.

ADPC

2004

- Disaster Risk Communication 1
- Climate Change

Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture and Trauma

2004

Working with victims of torture and trauma

Scholarship

Mary Fran Myer Scholarship

July 2005

To attend and present a paper at the Hazards Research Workshop at the Natural Hazards Center, University of Colorado.

Publications:

- Handmer, J., Coate, B. and **Choong, W.** (2007) The Indian Ocean Tsunami: Local Resilience in Phuket, Chapter 8 in *Managing Coastal Vulnerabilities*, Elsevier Ltd, UK.
 - Coate, B., Handmer, J. and **Choong, W.** (2006) Taking Care of People and Communities, *Disaster Prevention and Management*, Vol 15, No 1.
 - Primer for Disaster Risk Management in Asia September 2005
 - Primer for Integrated Flood Risk Management in Asia TBA
- (available on <http://www.adpc.net/UDRM/primer/web/flood.html> - user: primer p/w:ud123)
- Safer Cities 7 Community Based Flood Risk Management in Bangladesh 2004
 - Safer Cities 8 Channels of Communication: Public Awareness in Bangladesh 2004
- (available on <http://www.adpc.net/AUDMP/library.html>)

*Wei Choong Curriculum Vitae 130906
monkey121@hotmail.com*

Volunteer: Australian Youth Ambassadors for Development, OXFAM CAA, Free East Timor Campaign, Universidade Dili, English for new migrant mothers program Council of Adult Education.

References

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470/11 Iriyawetiya Road, Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

I have provided 5 referees because most of them are overseas and may be out on mission due to the nature of their work.