THE STRATEGY OF HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS ASIA ON MAINSTREAMING HUMAN SECURITY ISSUES IN ASIA

Richo Bimapaksi Jumranuddin

International Relations Department, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences

Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta

Email: bimapaksi@gmail.com

Abstract

This paper will analyze the mainstreaming process of Humanitarian Affairs Asia on human security through their activities. However, we have to understand first what is the mainstreaming itself in term of human security. According to Wolfgang Benedek, Matthias C. Kettemann, and Markus M. book, Mainstreaming Human Security in Peace Operations and Crisis Management: Policies, Problems, Potential, non-state actors (non-governmental organizations) has an important role in mainstreaming human security issues. Non-governmental organization must provide information and help increased awareness on human security issues. Non-governmental organizations also important to gather and publish the information, and bring people from different backgrounds to approaches and mainstreaming human security issues.

Keywords:

Humanitarian Affairs Asia; NGO; human security; mainstreaming; global civil society; transnational advocacy networks

Introduction

The existence of human security issues has brought its own risk for international relations. The needs to reach human security issues reinforces the needs to pay attention on non-states actors. Therefore, the expansion of human security studies encourage non-states actors to be involved in the field of human security. Pearlman and Cunningham in 2011 define non-states actors as an organized political actor that not directly connected to the state but pursue aims that affect vital state interests. It means that non-states actors is an actor that have a power and able to influence at regional, national or even in the international

level but they do not belong to any countries or states. One of non-states actors is non-governmental organizations. Nowadays, non-governmental organizations often participate in the global system lobby to influence international organizations. Non-governmental organizations are mostly a private international actors, and their members are not states, but volunteers from people of two or more states who have the same interest and ideas and influence the policies from state governments (Stratton, 2008). In today's world, non-governmental organizations act as the agent that also propose a solutions for so many human security matters. It happens because a lot of states are unable to do it.

Humanitarian Affairs Asia and the Global Society Involvement

Humanitarian Affairs Asia has several activities such as The University Scholars Leadership Symposium, Humanitarian Relief Programme, and Asia Fund Raising Conference. Most of their activities involving youth people from all parts of the world. The activities took place around Asia-Pacific region where there are still a lot of developing countries and place where so many human insecurity problems might appear.

Founded in May, 1st 2008, Humanitarian Affairs is a non-governmental organization which based in London, United Kingdom and has an Asia Regional Office in Thailand known as Humanitarian Affairs Asia. Humanitarian Affairs Asia is a member of the World Association of Non-Governmental Organization (WANGO), member of the World Alliance for Citizens Participation, and member of the International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE). Humanitarian Affairs Asia has a harmonious relationship with some United Nations unit such as United Nations Development Programme and United Nations Settlements Program (HAA, 2012). This organization aims to persuade and improve the sense of young leaders by fulfilling them with skills and tools to trigger them to paving the way for the larger social kindness. Moreover, Humanitarian Affairs Asia also developed some humanitarian activities in Southeast Asia region, such as humanitarian relief missions in disaster prone areas, offering educational services in remote area, providing equipment to those in need, and providing the children

with bicycle and stationary to easier their access to education facilities. The organization envisions in building an international network of inspired, empowered, and proactive young leaders who will be influential as the change-makers and decision-makers in the future (humanitarianaffairs.asia, 2016).

Humanitarian Affairs Asia as Transnational Advocacy Networks Actor

In order to achieve the mainstreaming human security itself, the concept of transnational advocacy network by Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink plays an important role to give a significant impact to the process of mainstreaming human security. The concept of transnational advocacy network stated that there are several major actors in transnational advocacy networks namely, international and domestic non-governmental organizations, research and advocacy organizations, local society movements, foundations, media, churches, trade unions, consumer organizations, intellectuals, parts of regional and international intergovernmental organizations, parts of the executive or parliamentary branches of governments. But, from all these major actor, international and domestic on-governmental organizations play the most important role in the advocacy process. Humanitarian Affairs Asia is one of the international non-governmental organizations that play an important role by involving mostly youth generation from all parts of the world as a change-makers in the future. Stated also in the idea of transnational advocacy networks, that non-governmental organizations usually the one that initiate actors and persuade more powerful actors. Later on this chapter will explain about that. Keck and Sikkink stated that basically the non-states actors especially non-governmental organizations try to seek an influence by using the power of informations, ideas, and strategies that they have as they do not have any power in traditional way (economic, military, and so on). This chapter will also explain more on how Humanitarian Affairs Asia try to seek the influence by using that way.

In the concept of transnational advocacy networks, Keck and Sikkink determine four types of strategy of transnational advocacy network where non-governmental organization as an actor in advocacy networks use to seek an

influence and support. The first strategy is the information politics or the ability to move politically usable information quickly and credibly to where it will have the most impact. The second strategy is symbolic politics or the ability to call upon symbols, actions or stories that make sense of a situation or claim for an audience that is frequently far away. The third is leverage politics or the ability to call upon powerful actors to affect a situation where weaker members of a network are unlikely to have influence. And the last is accountability politics or the effort to oblige more powerful actors to act on vaguer policies or principles they formally endorsed. In this case, these four strategies are influential in the activities of Humanitarian Affairs Asia and how the organization works to seek an influence. Regarding to the topic, this chapter will be divided into four parts of discussion based on the strategy of transnational advocacy networks. The conception of mainstreaming human security issues will be explained. And later on, the strategy of transnational advocacy network and the conception of mainstreaming human security issues will be elaborated.

Strategy of Humanitarian Affairs Asia

Information Politics

In order to explain about information politics strategy of Humanitarian Affairs Asia, it should be understood that Humanitarian Affairs Asia in blowing up human security issues through their activities use an informal way to spread and exchange the information. Humanitarian Affairs Asia provide information about the current issues that they try to seek an influence and support. This way are used by the Humanitarian Affairs Asia as a useful way to propose to other actors that concern in the same issues that might be in geographically or socially distant. Through their website, media social such as Facebook and Instagram are used to spread the information of the current issues. Humanitarian Affairs Asia provide not only facts, but also testimonies like stories that told by the people whose lives have been affected or the past actors or participants of Humanitarian Affairs Asia activities in Asia region. This can be seen on several reports of

Humanitarian Affairs Asia or promotion brochures of Humanitarian Affairs Asia activities that always provide facts and testimonies from the past activities.

Figure 1. Social Media as Informal Way to Spread Information

https://www.facebook.com/humanitarianaffairsUK/

Figure 2. Testimonial of Past USLS Participant

https://www.facebook.com/humanitarianaffairsUK/

From the figures above shows that Humanitarian Affairs Asia use the strategy of information politics of transnational advocacy networks by using social media such as facebook as the informal way to blowing up an issues or seek for other actors supports and interests. Nowadays, this kind of way are more effective because it is easier and a lot of people in the world utilize it. As stated by Andreas M. Kaplan and Michael Haenlein in 2010,

"Social media (informal way) is possible to create and exchange informations (user generated content)."

This is in line with the strategy of information politics from transnational advocacy networks where in information politics, many information exchanges are informal and through an informal way of spreading, and also the information that provided not only facts, but also give some testimonies. This kind of way also useful to gain more people that interest on the issues to join the actions by Humanitarian Affairs Asia through their activities.

Besides the ease of access in delivering facts, evidences, and testimonials, informal way also gives a benefit for the actors of transnational advocacy networks to build public discourse or public discussion. This way is useful to elevates the issues and make it as the most discussed issues in society.
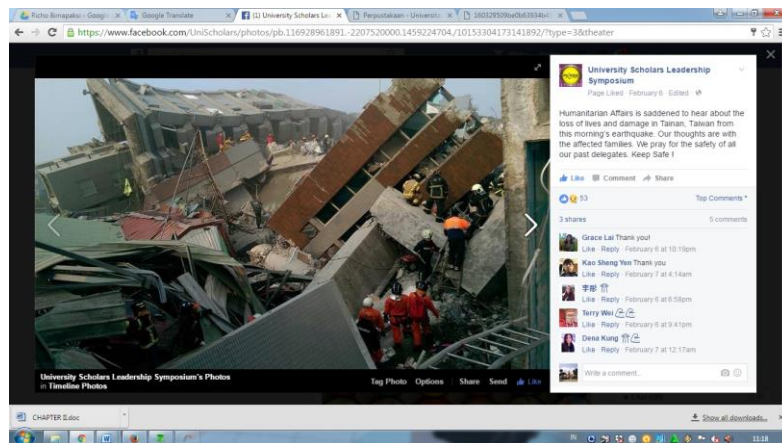
Symbolic Politics

The work principle of this symbolic politics refers to the ability of non-governmental organizations to spread symbols, actions or even stories that can provide an understanding of particular situation for the audience that located at the distance. In this case, Humanitarian Affairs Asia toward human security issues in Asia done by involving other organization and institutions, international actors, also young leaders coming from all over the world as the agent of change makers. As explained in the previous chapter, Humanitarian Affairs Asia is a member of the World Association of Non-Governmental Organization (WANGO), member of the World Alliance for Citizens Participation, and member of the International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE). Humanitarian Affairs Asia also has a harmonious relationship with some United Nations unit such as United Nations Development Programme and United Nations Settlements Program in order to promote their interest easier (HAA, 2012).

Humanitarian Affairs Asia as a non-govenmental organization by involving other international actor to express about human security issues to international society is based on the obligation to maintain the world peace and

human security especially in developing countries across Asian region. We can see this strategy applied in the humanitarian relief programme of Humanitarian Affairs Asia where there is a human security issues emerged, Humanitarian Affairs Asia actively express the issues to international society. This action aimed to gain awareness, support and fund from international society.

Figure 3. Symbolic Politics by Humanitarian Affairs Asia

https://www.facebook.com/UniScholars/

"Humanitarian Affairs is saddened to hear about the loss of lives and damage in Tainan, Taiwan from this morning's earthquake. Our thoughts are with the affected families. We pray for the safety of all our past delegates. Keep Safe!" - Humanitarian Affairs Asia

The figure above shows that Humanitarian Affairs Asia expressed their deep sorrow for the victims of Taiwan's earthquake that happened in February, 6th 2016. From here, we can see that Humanitarian Affairs Asia applied the strategy of symbolic politics to express an issues to international society. Through this kind of action, society later on will notice and aware toward the issues. This thing can be proven by seeing the comments from the society that support on the issue. The increasing of support on the issues, will increase the interest of society, so more people will aware on the issues.

In the end, symbolic politics will shows how society later will have a sense of belonging on an issue regardless than identity.

Leverage Politics

Leverage politics is the ability to involving actors that have power to influence. Through its activities, University Scholars Leadership Symposium and Asia Fund Raising Program, Humanitarian Affairs Asia involving so many influenced actors to inspiring next future leaders. As explained in the previous chapter about Humanitarian Affairs Asia and its activities, since the establishment of the organization in 2008, there are so many actors that has been involved in Humanitarian Affairs Asia activities. From other non-governmental organizations, governments, activists, or even inspiring famous actors or even individuals. There are also fund-raising coaches, major gift strategist, experts and specialist of fund-raising campaigns and communications as the actors that involved to inspiring the participants of Humanitarian Affairs Asia activities. The speakers mostly have gained the international recognition for their works in major donor development, prospect research, direct marketing, crowdfunding, and have a deep understanding of Asian philantropy and human security and humanitarian issues (HAA, 2016).

Through involving inspiring actors like this, Humanitarian Affairs Asia expected to produce future leaders as the agent of change makers that can spread and express the human security issues to the international society. Humanitarian Affairs Asia in line with the ideas that non-governmental organizations as the actor in advocacy networks are concerned with political effectiveness where policy change makers are involved which might be from governments or any other international actors in order to persuade and presurize (E. Keck, Sikkink 1999). Humanitarian Affairs Asia in doing their activities collaborate with governments where the activities are held. As mentioned in the previous chapter, they also build a cooperation with actor from international society such as international organizations (IGO) like United Nations and European Commission, companies or multi-national cooperation (MNC) such as Adidas, Burger King, Cadbury, Cathay Pacific, Coca-Cola, Dell, eBay, KFC, LEVI'S, McDonald's, Nestle, Starbucks, etc. in order to gain support and fund (humanitarianaffairs.asia,
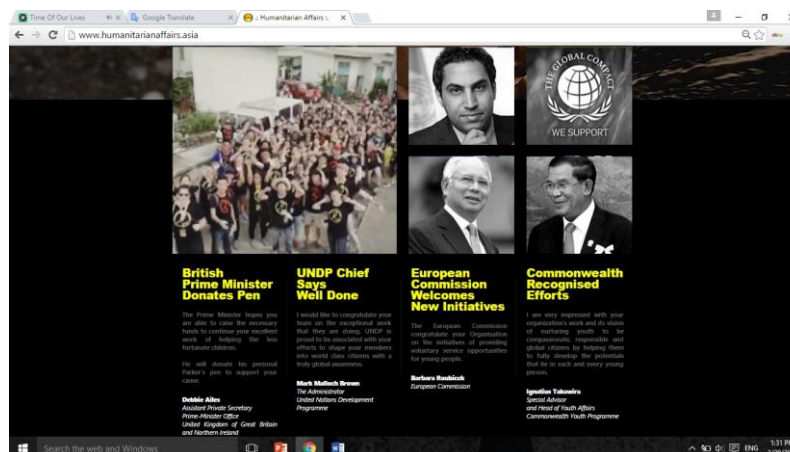
2016). Therefore, Humanitarian Affairs Asia expecting that the international society will increase their concern and awareness toward the issues.

Leverage politics will be more successful by the involvement of the influenced actor. The more actors involve the more issues spreads, and the more people aware.

Accountability Politics

In this type of strategy, non-governmental organizations would do many exertions to force the actors that have a political power to remain and or change its position toward the issues. This thing is very important to be done by the non-governmental organizations because in order to gain support and fund, they need a very long periods. Therefore, the role of powerful actor continuously are needed. In the figure below, Humanitarian Affairs Asia successfully hold and gain support from actors that has a political power such as British Prime Minister, United Nations Development Programme Chief, European Commission, and Commonwealth. Some of the actors support and recognized the organization because of its efforts to shape the world class citizens with truly global awareness that concern on human security issues.

Figure 4. Support for Humanitarian Affairs Asia

http://www.humanitarianaffairs.asia/

As the idea of social movements stated that one of the principal social forms through which collectivities give voice to concerns about the rights, welfare,

and well-being of themselves and others by engaging in different forms of collective action and public protest. Social movements play such an important role in bringing about social change in political, religious, educational, health, corporate, government, and other institutional arenas (UC Santa Barbara n.d.). So in order to gain society trust, Humanitarian Affairs Asia must hold the influenced actors. Thus, the organization will be in line with the society and easier to gain supports.

From the explanation above about the strategy of Humanitarian Affairs Asia and the concept of mainstreaming human security issues by non-governmental organizations we can elaborate that Humanitarian Affairs Asia do the mainstreaming process on human security through four strategy of transnational advocacy networks namely, information politics, symbolic politics, leverage politics, and accountability politics. These four strategies are related to one and another. These actions can be recognized as the mainstreaming human security by non-governmental organizations because, first Humanitarian Affairs Asia gather and provide the informations regarding to the issues of human security. Second, after gather and provide the informations, Humanitarian Affairs Asia publish the informations. Last but not least, Humanitarian Affairs Asia help the international society to shape their awareness on human security issues. This is in line with the idea of mainstreaming human security issues by the non-governmental organizations. Since Humanitarian Affairs Asia operates in Asian region, so, it can be said that Humanitarian Affairs Asia mainstreaming human security issues through four strategies of transnational advocacy network in Asian region.

Conclusion

There are four strategies that applied by the Humanitarian Affairs Asia in mainstreaming human security issues. The first is information politics, where Humanitarian Affairs Asia gather the information and spread the information through informal way of spreading using social media, or any online resources to the world. The second is symbolic politics, where Humanitarian Affairs Asia

cooperated with other organizations to express the issues to the international society. The third is leverage politics, where Humanitarian Affairs Asia involved influenced international actors to inspiring the next future leaders that participated in Humanitarian Affairs Asia activities. Last, accountability politics, where this organization would do many exertions to force and hold the actors that have a political power so they can easier gain support and fund. This four strategies applied by Humanitarian Affairs Asia in the process of mainstreaming human security issues in Asia region.

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