

# RAPID NEEDS FIELD ASSESSMENT USING MILITARY HEALTH APPRECIATION PROCESS FOR THE DEPLOYMENT OF MALAYSIAN ARMED FORCES FIELD HOSPITAL DURING THE ACUTE PHASE OF THE COVID-19 CRISIS IN TAWAU, SABAH

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## INTRODUCTION

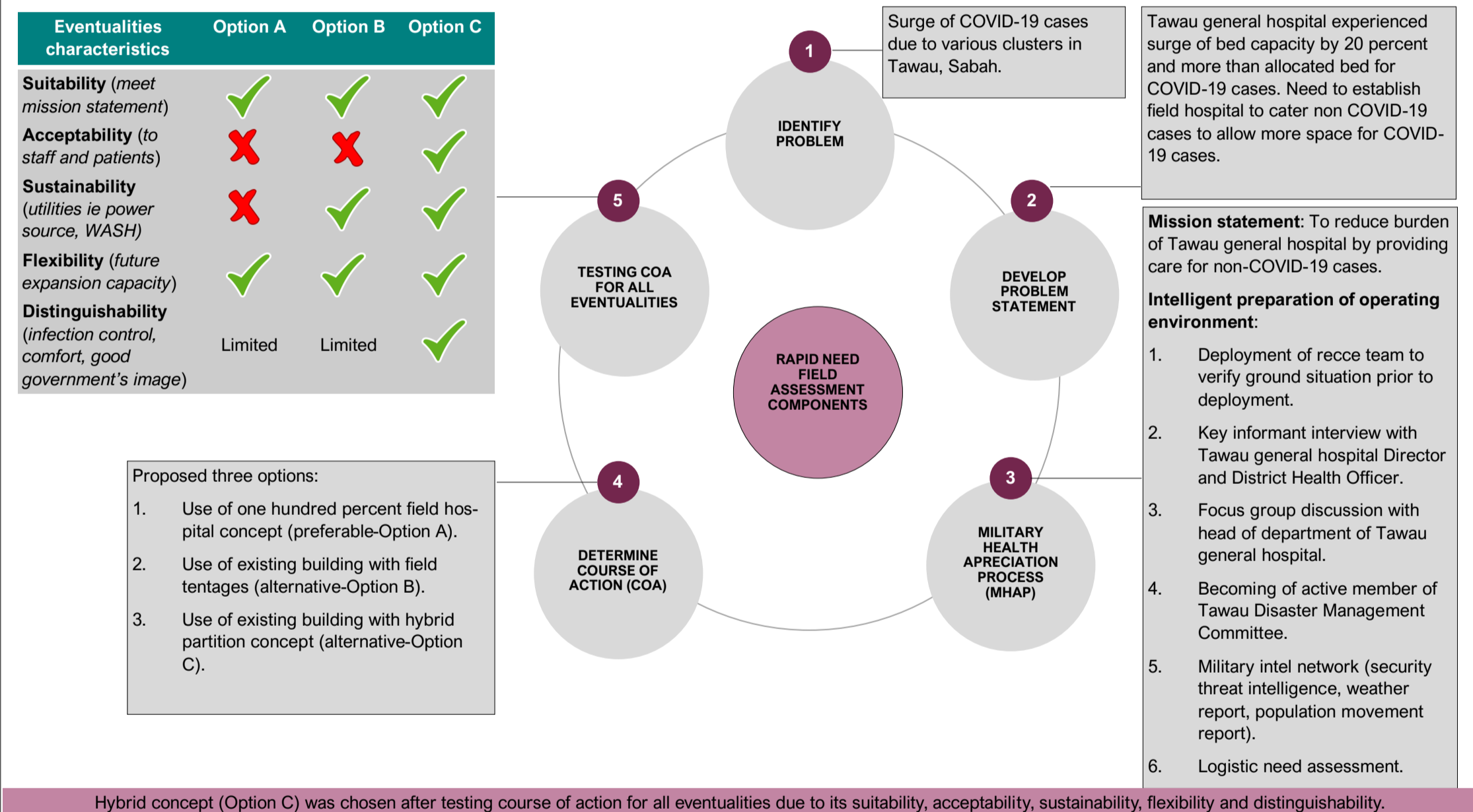
- The third wave of COVID-19 hit Malaysia from September until December 2020, and Tawau, an east coast district in Sabah was also severely affected<sup>1</sup>.
- During the acute phase of COVID-19 crisis in Tawau, combined civil military response were activated. Malaysian Armed Forces played a significant role during the crisis via its military assistance for civilian agencies (MACA) and military operations other than war (MOOTW)<sup>2</sup>.
- For healthcare services, Malaysian Armed Forces Health Services is responsible in providing primary, secondary and tertiary care including its unique deployment medicine capabilities. The deployment of field hospital is paramount in assisting civilian agencies for disaster relief effort<sup>3</sup>.

## METHOD

- A review of retrospective record was done to understand the planning, deployment, and operation of the Malaysian Armed Forces Field Hospital in Tawau.
- Data and information on crisis management were obtained from the official mission completion report and were analysed descriptively.

## RESULTS

The use of the Military Health Appreciation Process (MHAP) during the planning phase has helped to ensure success and a high level of efficiency during the deployment and operation of the Malaysian Armed Forces Field Hospital in Tawau. The deployment has successfully met its objectives to aid local hospitals during the acute phase of the crisis.



## DISCUSSION

- Rapid need field assessment tools generally can be divided into two levels; community-level rapid need and interagency-level rapid need assessment.
- The community-level assessment for Public Health Emergency Response (CASPER) for instance is designed to provide public health leaders and emergency managers information about a community so they can make informed decisions<sup>4</sup>. Another community-level tools that might be useful is Multi-cluster Rapid Assessment Mechanism (McRAM)<sup>5</sup>. For interagency level rapid need assessment, Multi-cluster / sector Initial Rapid Needs Assessment (MIRA)<sup>6</sup> is relevant to guide emergency responders on the joint strategic planning process.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the military played a significant role as part of a multi-agency effort from federal and state governments to mitigate the COVID-19 crisis in Tawau with the deployment of a military field hospital. The use of a comprehensive Military Health Appreciation Process for rapid need field assessment was found to be useful in ensuring mission success.



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