

## snapshot



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# The Regional Resilience Initiative: Engaging with ASEAN

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The Regional Resilience Initiative (RRI) contributes to reducing the impact of disasters on vulnerable communities in Southeast Asia. Launched in 2014, with funding from the Canadian government and Canadian Red Cross, it focuses on enhancing capacities of National Societies from ASEAN Member States and Timor-Leste, so they may advocate more strongly on behalf of communities at national and regional levels. The initiative also seeks to strengthen partnerships with ASEAN and other regional stakeholders who are active in promoting resilience.

## Working hand-in-hand with ASEAN's Humanitarian Assistance Centre

- In October 2014, IFRC and ASEAN's Humanitarian Assistance Centre (AHA Centre) forged [an action plan](#) for sharing, coordination and communication during emergencies.
- In 2015, IFRC contributed to [AHA Center's Executive \(ACE\) Programme](#), training 16 National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) staff (including three female) and nine National Society (NS) staff (including five female). The collaboration will continue in 2016.
- All NS receive AHA Centre disaster updates, and the IFRC shares its emergency operations updates with AHA Centre to ensure the coordination of information.

- Acknowledgment of the role that IFRC and NS play in realizing ASEAN's vision of 'One ASEAN, One Response'. In February 2016, AHA Centre invited IFRC and all 10 NS (five participants, including three female) from ASEAN countries to attend a two-day workshop in Jakarta on the formulation of an ASEAN Joint Disaster Response Plan.
- Following the Myanmar floods in August 2015, one Indonesian Red Cross staff was deployed as an ASEAN Emergency Response and Assessment Team (ERAT) member. She is an IFRC Regional Disaster Response Team (RDRT) member, trained as ERAT in 2015 as part of the ACE programme.

## Participating in regional disaster response simulation exercises

### Mentawai Megathrust Disaster Relief Exercise (MMDiReX), Padang, Indonesia (March 2014)

Indonesian Red Cross worked closely with the Indonesian Government (BNPB) ensuring their participation in all aspects of this exercise. Recommendations were also made by IFRC to further test the legal framework for international assistance, as part of the After Action Review. A total of 190 Indonesian Red Cross staff and volunteers participated, giving specific support to the mobile clinic, water and sanitation unit, and community mobilization.

## ASEAN Disaster Preparedness and Response Simulation Exercise, Myanmar (September 2014)<sup>1</sup>

The Myanmar Red Cross Society and IFRC played a key role in the organization and facilitation of this event. Myanmar Red Cross Society successfully advocated for the inclusion of a presentation on [International Disaster Response Law](#) (IDRL) and IDRL-related injects during the exercise.

## ASEAN Regional Forum Disaster Relief Exercise (ARF DiReX), Malaysia (May 2015)<sup>2</sup>

Co-organized by the Government of Malaysia and the Government of the People's Republic of China, this biennial-simulation event was designed to facilitate disaster response coordination mechanisms between ASEAN and other states in Asia Pacific, as well as international humanitarian players. The Malaysian Red Crescent played an active role in the exercise with support from Thai (2 staff), Indonesian (1 staff) and Lao (1 staff) Red Cross societies as a test of regional cooperation in times of emergency. IFRC disaster law experts provided technical advice.

## The ASEAN Regional Forum Inter-Sessional Meeting on Disaster Relief, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar (February 2016)

At this event, Myanmar Red Cross presented their experiences and lessons learned from the 2015 flood operation, including deployment of an International Disaster Response Law (IDRL) expert from IFRC to support the national Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) in Nay Pyi Taw.

## Conducting ongoing technical dialogue with the ASEAN Secretariat

IFRC is engaged in an ongoing dialogue with the ASEAN Secretariat, in areas of disaster risk reduction and community resilience, disaster law, gender-based violence, youth engagement, the [ASEAN Safe School Initiative](#) (ASSI)<sup>3</sup>, and the post-2015 AADMER Work Programme. IFRC is increasingly recognized by ASEAN as a technical reference. Examples include:

- The IFRC and NS have been invited to several ASEAN meetings including ACDM, AADMER Working Group meetings, ASSI technical workshops, and youth policy meetings (made possible with support of RRI).
- In March 2016, the IFRC participated in a consultation workshop run by the ASEAN Secretariat on the development of the ASEAN 5 Year Work Plan on Youth 2016-2020. The potential of Red Cross Youth to help spread messages of risk reduction within communities is increasingly recognized, in particular with regards to ASSI
- Both ASEAN and AHA Centre attended meetings/workshops hosted by the IFRC through the RRI, along with NS and government representatives from ASEAN countries, such as the annual Community Safety and Resilience Forum in 2014 and 2015, Pandemic Preparedness Workshop in November 2014, Regional Resilience Workshop in February 2015, and the regional Disaster Law Forum in June 2015<sup>4</sup>.
- An ASEAN representative attended IFRC's December 2015 General Assembly in Geneva (through separate funding), conducting a side meeting with the leaders of the ten National Societies in the ASEAN region.
- Some IFRC/NS tools were included in the ASEAN School Safety Toolkit drafted at the end of 2015 by the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization.

### Looking ahead

The new AADMER Work Programme (2016-2020) mentions IFRC or Red Cross Red Crescent as a partner in four<sup>5</sup> of its eight priority programmes:

- **Priority-1:** AWARE: Risk Aware ASEAN Community
- **Priority-5:** RESPOND AS ONE: Transforming Mechanisms for ASEAN's leadership in Response
- **Priority-6:** EQUIP: Enhanced capacities for One ASEAN One Response
- **Priority-8:** LEAD: ASEAN Leadership for Excellence and Innovation in Disaster Management

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.ifrc.org/en/news-and-media/news-stories/asia-pacific/myanmar/international-disaster-response-law-makes-headway-in-myanmar-67333/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.ifrc.org/en/what-we-do/disaster-law/news/asia-pacific/malaysia-making-sure-we-are-prepared-before-the-real-one-hits-68817/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://bit.ly/1U6B2wa>

<sup>4</sup> Materials are available on the IFRC Online Library for Southeast Asia: <https://sites.google.com/site/drrtoolsinsoutheastasia/>

<sup>5</sup> In addition, IFRC along with National Societies can contribute in Priority-2 through its school safety initiative, Priority-3 by mainstreaming CCA into DRR initiatives, Priority-4 with inclusion of gender and diversity as well as migration and Priority-7 Recovery.



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