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From: Jagan Chapagain

Sent: Friday, March 08, 2013 6:17 PM

To: #AP-Presidents East Asia NSs; #AP-Presidents Pacific NSs; #AP-Presidents South Asia NSs; #AP-Presidents South East Asia NSs; #AP-SGs East Asia NSs; #AP-SGs Pacific NSs; #AP-SGs South Asia NSs; #AP-SGs South East Asia NSs

Cc: Al PANICO; Sofia STOIMENOVA; John GWYNN; #AP-KL Unit Heads; #AP HoDs; #AP HoRDs

Subject: International Women's Day - 2013

Dear Presidents and Secretary Generals,

It gives me great pleasure and honour to wish you continued excellence and to thank you for your inspired leadership on the occasion of International Women’s Day this year.

As we know, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies continues to give very high priority to gender and diversity issues globally. You will have received a recent communication in which the IFRC’s Secretary General has also conveyed his hopes that all the National Societies will sign and implement the global Gender Pledge as presented to the last International Conference in 2011.

I am taking this opportunity to write to you to seek your kind feedback on an idea to offer senior Red Cross and Red Crescent women leaders (Presidents and Secretary Generals) an opportunity to convene a forum to exchange perspectives as women leaders of the National Societies in Asia Pacific. This idea is similar to existing Asia Pacific Youth Network (APYN) for the young people and Asia Pacific Fundraisers Network (APFN) for the NS fundraisers.

I am seeking your kind feedback and ideas on whether you are agreeable to the concept, if your national society would like to participate, who you feel the senior invited participants should be, and what kind of issues you propose such a forum should discuss for the overall betterment of the wider Federation from a gender and diversity perspective.

If there is overall agreement to such a proposal, I would propose that the first forum participants should draft their own terms of reference and objectives. It could be that such a forum decides to establish a self-sustaining network of champions to strengthen and advocate for improved gender and diversity sensitive approaches in all aspects of National Societies’ work and programmes. The ToR could include, for example, how such a forum and network could best advocate in the wider leadership forums for implementation of the Federation’s Strategies and tools to sensitise national societies at all levels on gender and diversity issues.

There are many Societies that have already made significant advances in drafting and adopting Gender Policies, guidelines and training courses that have improved the gendered impact of services at community level. Other Societies have made significant progress in collecting gender disaggregated statistics so that they can better manage a strategic balance of women and men in their membership, volunteer, staff, and governance and leadership roles, and have already shared these statistics on the Federation’s Databank.

If established, I would hope that such a pioneering forum of senior women leaders, could share with each other existing examples of excellence in promoting gender and diversity sensitive approaches, and develop collective as well as individual action plans and mutual support mechanisms to ensure that such practices are adapted and adopted in a much wider range of National Societies. This shared learning could make a positive contribution in improving the impact of programs and services from gender and diversity perspectives.

If there is an agreement to have such a forum, we will naturally be hoping to hear from a National Society which would be happy to host the inaugural forum.

With warm regards again on this International Women’s Day and I look forward to your kind feedback and thoughts on this overall concept.

Sincerely Yours’

Jagan Chapagain

Director,

Asia Pacific Zone